NOTE:

Locations in the script are the first things I thought of. They will all have to be determined when in Paris.

Art director will disregard any mistakes I made through ignorance and we will find the correct places to use.

People living in Paris have mentioned the following spots to me that may be of some use or may not. I list them in case they mean anything - if not, disregard.

Interior of Boeuf sur le Tois
Train Bleu
Chez Pauline
Luca Carton
The fabricated beach by the river each summer.
Chop Bar (near flea market for gypsy music)
Deyrolles
The Dome
Closerie De Lilo
CafÈ Charbon
Bal De Musette
Aberkamp (sp?)
Luxembourg Gardens
Canal St. Martin
Olette (sp?) meat district
Museum of Magic
Muse Graven (Hall of Mirrors)
Circe Gizan
Circe DíHiver
Palais Royale (sand box)
Bronze sculpture in Bois de Boulogne
Jardin de palm museum (sp?)

The above may be helpful or not all. They were just suggestions quickly thought of by people who had lived in Paris.

Must also keep alert for any glaring mistakes regarding, characters, dates, etc.

MONTAGE - POV SHOTS OF PARIS SET TO MUSIC

We hear voices over - GIL and INEZ, a young couple of Americans, engaged to be married as we shall learn. (Standard locations are listed here but they will be determined later when we location scout.)

EXT. SHOT OF CHAMPS ELYSEE - DAY

GIL (V.O.)
This is unbelievable - it's so open and beautiful. Can you just picture it years ago before all the joints and commercial traffic was here - god...

INEZ (V.O.)
It's so touristy.

CUT TO:

EXT. SHOT OF MONTMARTRE - DAY

GIL (V.O.)
Look at this, Inez - look over here - you can see the whole city.

INEZ (V.O.)
I forget, you've never really been here before.

GIL (V.O.)
Only for a few days years ago - and I remember falling in love with it then.

INEZ (V.O.)
I'm not as impressed. I mean it's pretty but so are a lot of other places I've visited. You just haven't been around.

CUT TO:

EXT. SHOTS - STREETS/BOULEVARDS - DAY

GIL (V.O.)
Look at these streets - and boulevards - I'm thinking of a Pisarro I've seen of Paris years ago in the rain.
(MORE)

GIL (V.O.) (cont'd)
Can you picture how drop dead gorgeous this city is in the rain? And all of these cafes - what went on in them -

INEZ (V.O.)
I'm hungry.

GIL (V.O.)
Let's eat in one of the outdoor cafes.

INEZ (V.O.)
It's a myth that anyplace you eat in France is superb. Besides I promised my parents we'd eat with them. Daddy's made reservations.

CUT TO:

EXT. PLACE DE LA CONCORDE - DAY

GIL (V.O.)
I remember this from the first time I was here. And of course from all those great Hollywood musicals. When James Joyce was going blind he would be driven here at night and he could figure out where he was by counting the lights on the Concorde.

INEZ (V.O.)
You romanticize everything so much. That's one of the things that's wrong with your writing - and I'm not criticizing, I'm being constructive.

CUT TO:

EXT. VERY ROMANTIC VISTA - DAY

GIL (V.O.)
I'm in love with this town. I am absolutely in love with this town - could you ever think of living here after we're married?

INEZ (V.O.)
Oh god, no. I mean it's very nice but I could never live out of the United States. And if I could it would be someplace totally different.

GIL (V.O.)
Like?

INEZ (V.O.)
I don't know, Hawaii.

GIL (V.O.)
That's America.

INEZ (V.O.)
Yes but it's - Hawaiian.

GIL (V.O.)
I'd move here in a heartbeat.

CUT TO:

EXT. REVERSE ON GIL AND INEZ AT ROMANTIC VISTA - DAY

We finally see this couple inspired by the romance of the city, Gil kisses her.

CUT TO:

I/E. HOTEL LOBBY - DAY

Gil and Inez enter lobby of hotel they are all at. In the lobby they are awaited by her parents, JOHN and HELEN BLAIR.

JOHN
There are our sight-seers.

INEZ
He's the sight-seer. I've seen Paris before.

HELEN
I'm sure you took him to the top of the Eiffel Tower.

INEZ
I didn't have to. Gil rhapsodizes about every street and boulevard - every little cafe.

GIL
Why does anyone want to live anywhere else? The charm and the beauty and culture - when you think of the painters and writers which of course is meaningful to me.

JOHN
Can we rhapsodize at dinner because I'm starved.

CUT TO:

INT. FOUR STAR RESTAURANT - NIGHT

HELEN
(lifting wine glass)
A toast to John's new business venture here.

JOHN
Well I'll be perfectly frank - I'm excited over this corporate merger between our people and the French company but otherwise I'm not a big Francophile.

HELEN
John hates their politics.

JOHN
They've certainly been no friend to the United States.

GIL
But you're prejudiced being such an ardent George Bush Republican.

INEZ
Must we get into that discussion yet again.

GIL
There's nothing wrong with your father and I disagreeing. That's what democracy is. Your father is a huge fund raiser for the President and I happen to think the Bush administration is the worst in American history. We respect each other's right to differ in a civilized debate - am I right?
(MORE)

GIL (cont'd)
(this last directed at John gets no enthusiasm but a cold look from him)

HELEN
Can we discuss the wedding plans? I invited the Sherman's. I felt he's your father's lawyer's brother and they knew you since you were a baby.

INEZ
I always liked Larry Sherman.

JOHN
The hall won't hold all the people once Helen gets through.

HELEN
I also arranged for some of the singers from the opera to sing.

INEZ
Isn't that great, Gil?

GIL
Sure. I just want to say Nixon was a crook but not a crook and a total incompetent.

INEZ
Gil.

Just then another young couple pass the table and recognize Inez. PAUL and CAROL BATES.

PAUL
Inez.

INEZ
Paul! Carol -
(ad-lib introductions)
Paul and Carol Bates - Mom, Dad, you know Gil - you didn't mention you'd be here.

CAROL
It was sudden. Paul got invited to lecture at the Sorbonne.

INEZ
Oh - how terrific. Dad's here on business and we free-loaded along.

PAUL
It's great. We can spend some time together.

GIL
Don't we have a lot of commitments?

INEZ
What?

CAROL
What are you doing tomorrow? We're driving to Versailles.

INEZ
I've seen it but Gil hasn't.

GIL
Don't we have something tomorrow? We were going to have lunch at Les Deux Magots. I have a photo my old professor gave me that he took years ago at Les Deux Magots with Samuel Becket. I mean he didn't know him but he saw him alone at a table writing and he got up his nerve and said Becket was an idol of his - as he is of mine - and could he take a photo with him and Becket was great about it. You saw it -

INEZ
Right, well - we'd love to see you guys. Versailles is beautiful - you have to see it Gil - it's perfect for you with your obsession with "les temps perdue".

GIL
Yes - but -

PAUL
It's such a lovely treat running into you here. You look great in that dress.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT

INEZ
(as they do their nocturnal ablutions)
I hope you're not going to be as anti-social tomorrow when we go to Versailles.

GIL
How was I anti-social?

INEZ
It was so clear you didn't want to go.

GIL
Well I remember Paul and Carol Bates and I can't say I'm as taken with him as you are.

INEZ
He's brilliant. We were at Brown together and Carol's very bright.

GIL
I find him a pseudo-intellectual.

INEZ
I hardly think the Sorbonne would have him lecturing if he's a pseudo-intellectual.

GIL
All I remember is we were at your friend's wedding - the one that married the other pseudo-intellectual.

INEZ
You mean Marge Lang? You think Victor Lang is a pseudo-intellectual too?

GIL
All I remember is we were talking about southern writers and Paul Bates was comparing Erskine Caldwell to William Faulkner with his deconstruction theories that sounded deep but were bull.
(MORE)

GIL (cont'd)
I took an instant disliking to him and Victor Lang did forty minutes on the poetry of rock music lyrics which I also didn't buy and his analogies with Walt Whitman - gimme a break.

INEZ
Well you never outgrew Cole Porter so anything after 1950 is off your radar and as far as literature goes if anyone criticizes one of your gods like Faulkner - or Hemingway - to you they become sub-atomic particles.

GIL
Hey - I can recognize intellectual babble when I hear it.

INEZ
And I wish you'd stop baiting my father.

GIL
I don't bait him. We disagree.

INEZ
He's much more politically astute than you are.

GIL
How astute do you have to be? Look at America. This president's made it one of the most disliked countries in the world. By it's own citizens.

INEZ
I'm too tired to argue with you. I assumed you would love to see Versailles. I've already seen it.

GIL
I'm not saying I don't want to see Versailles...

INEZ
You'd think you'd be a little less contentious with my father. He is paying for this trip.

CUT TO:

EXT. VERSAILLES - DAY

Next day. The two couples are there and Paul waxes pedantically as they tour the grounds or inside.

PAUL
I believe Louis moved his court here in about 1682 - originally this was all swamp land - in fact, if I'm not mistaken, in old French the word Versailles means something like "terrain where the weeds have been pulled". The main structure is French classical style at its height - the work, I believe of Louis Le Vau, I think Mansart and Charles LeBrun I believe...

CUT TO:

EXT. VERSAILLES/PICTURESQUE SPOT/GARDEN - DAY

INEZ
I think I could get used to living in a place like this.

PAUL
As long as the showers had good water pressure.

CAROL
Where are you two planning to live after the wedding?

INEZ
In New York til we have children. Then I insist we move to Connecticut. But right now my parents own a condo which they use once a month when they fly in from Florida and they're happy to stay in the guest room and let us live in the rest of the place.

PAUL
(jokingly to Gil)
How convenient. I hope you get along with her parents. I mean a few days every month...

INEZ
For a free condo on Sutton Place - he'll get along.

GIL
I still don't see why we can't get a little attic with a skylight in Paris - in Montmartre say - and I write my novels and you -

INEZ
I what?

GIL
At least you speak French. Why can't you make your jewelry here?

INEZ
Gil romanticizes everything - the garret in Montmartre - the struggling novelist, me making jewelry -

CAROL
La Bohème.

PAUL
All that's missing is tuberculosis.

INEZ
Tell them about the lead character in the book you're working on.

GIL
I don't like to discuss my work.

INEZ
Not the plot, just the lead character. He runs a nostalgia shop.

CAROL
What's a nostalgia shop?

PAUL
Not one of those stores that sells Shirley Temple dolls and old radios? I never know who buys that stuff - who'd want it.

INEZ
People who live in the past. - Who think the only music worth listening to is by Irving Berlin or Cole Porter.

GIL
I'm not going to get into a music discussion, but you will admit contemporary culture is nothing to brag about.

INEZ
And just what era would you have preferred to live in, Miniver Cheevy?

PAUL
And don't say classical Greece, the Athens of Socrates and Euripides because they were slave owners.

CAROL
I could have been very happy in the English countryside as a neighbor of Jane Austen's.

PAUL
You know what the fallacy is here? Golden Age thinking.

INEZ
I agree.

PAUL
The erroneous notion that one time period was better than another when in reality they all had their pros and cons with none superior except in the romantic imagination of those who find coping with the present too difficult.

INEZ
Speaking of romance, I think what you two did on your honeymoon was the most romantic of all.

PAUL
White water rafting?

CAROL
It was harrowing - but so great.

INEZ
(to Gil)
See? That to me would be romantic and sexy.

CUT TO:

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Same night. Inez, Gil and her parents dine at a four star restaurant - no dialogue, just rich food.

CUT TO:

INT. BRIDAL ACCESSORY PLACE - DAY

HELEN
I think it's perfect. It's understated but truly elegant.

INEZ
And it's not too simple is it?

HELEN
Not at all. This is going to be such an event, Inez. I only wish -

INEZ
(cutting her off)
I don't want to hear it, Mom.

HELEN
I can't help feeling you can do much better.

INEZ
Friends who have read Gil's writing think he's a real talent.

HELEN
Yes, I know. Friends are friends. There were others, more suitable prospects you went out with -

INEZ
Bob was complicated and Mitch Adams was so full of himself - I'm very comfortable with Gil.

HELEN
You're father thinks it's because you can control him.

INEZ
That is so absurd. Gil is his own person. The fact that he likes to please me doesn't mean I control him.

HELEN
It could take years before he realized his potential - if he realizes - if there's potential there -

INEZ
His professors at school thought he would emerge.

HELEN
Well until he emerges I hate the thought of you two living like gypsies.

INEZ
I wouldn't call a condo on Sutton Place gypsies.

HELEN
Your father would love to help even more if Gil wasn't so sensitive about accepting it.

INEZ
You can understand that. Look, I have my jewelry business and Gil earns a living while he's learning his craft.

HELEN
What kind of foolish job is that - running a nostalgia shop. Who buys those old seventy eight records and Charlie Chaplain wristwatches.

INEZ
It give him time to write.

HELEN
I hope you're not going to let him talk you into moving to Paris.

INEZ
Not a chance, Mom. I have everything sensibly planned.

HELEN
Good. Because Dad and I want our only child nearby - and we want to participate in raising our grandchildren. We'll be moving up from Palm Beach in another three or four years.

INEZ
Gil is aware -

HELEN
Where is he now?

INEZ
He's either at the hotel writing which he does like a monk - or by now walking around Paris imagining that it's God's gift to civilization.

CUT TO:

EXT. TBD - DAY

Gil by himself, enjoying Paris. We can be either at the flower market, bookstalls by the river or Luxembourg Gardens.

CUT TO:

INT. MODERN MUSEUM - DAY

Gil, Inez, Paul and Carol are getting a private guide by a cute little local girl who speaks enough English.

GUIDE
And here you can see how Matisse was fascinated by oriental patterns - it makes a vivid background for one of his favorite models.

PAUL
That would be about in the late thirties in Nice.

GUIDE
Exactly.

PAUL
Matisse was already experimenting with collage and you can see the roots of his later work.

INEZ
(to Gil)
He's so knowledgable, isn't he?

GIL
I'd rather hear the guide.

INEZ
Why? He knows as much - or more.

GIL
But her behind's cuter.

INEZ
I thought you loved Matisse.

GIL
I do but is there a subject this guy's not the final word on?

PAUL
You feel the sensuality in Matisse because it's known he was having quite torrid sexual affairs with his models.

GUIDE
No - this is a mistaken idea. Actually he was very discreet with his models - very dedicated to the painting - very few affairs.

PAUL
I don't buy that - the voluptuousness with which he paints them gives him away.

GIL
No. She's right - I read the new two volume biography of him. The girl's right.

PAUL
(skeptically)
I'll have to check that out.

They walk on.

INEZ
When did you read the biography of Matisse?

GIL
Me? Why would I read a biography of Matisse?

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL GYM - DAY

Gil and Inez both working out.

INEZ
God, I'm out of shape.

GIL
Your shape is fine - better than fine - you look like one of the statues with the hips and lips -
(fondles her, she brushes him off)

INEZ
Stop. We're in a public place.

GIL
(pursuing it)
But you're so sexy.

INEZ
Have you ever done it in a bath tub?

GIL
Why do you ask?

INEZ
They have these huge bathtubs in the suite - it might be fun.

GIL
You know how to get to me.

INEZ
I'm excited about tonight, are you?

GIL
What's tonight?

INEZ
I told you - Daddy's business partner got us all invited to a wine tasting.

GIL
I don't know the first thing about wine.

INEZ
Neither does Daddy. That's how you learn. Besides I invited Paul and Carol and Paul knows about French vineyards.

GIL
Do we have to go?

INEZ
We can discuss it in the bathtub.

CUT TO:

INT. WINE TASTING - NIGHT

Inez already a little high. Her parents having fun. Gil is also feeling it by now.

INEZ
(tasting)
I can't tell the difference. They're both delicious.

JOHN
Take it easy Inez. Those little sips add up.

HELEN
You should talk, John - especially for someone who advocated the boycott of french wines.

JOHN
I'll always take a California wine but the Napa Valley is six thousand miles away.

They laugh and drink.

INEZ
(to Gil)
Which do you prefer?

GIL
To me they're all great. What the hell do I know?

INEZ
I don't think I've ever seen your cheeks so red.

GIL
That's because I took a hot bath.

Paul and Carol have ambled over, having heard Gil's last amorous remark.

PAUL
Ah yes - sex and alcohol - It fuels the desire but kills the performance - according to Shakespeare.

CAROL
Have you tasted the '61? It's divine - though Paul found it - what?

PAUL
Slightly more tannic than the '59. I prefer a smoky feeling to a fruity feeling, don't you agree?

INEZ
I can't tell and Gil is no longer sure what planet we're on.

GIL
It's not so - I'm fine - I'm fine - You will admit she's a sexy woman.

PAUL
I never doubted it. You're a very lucky man.
(toast)
May you write many books and sell many Shirley Temple dolls.

GIL
To the little green Heinz pickle pin.

CUT TO:

EXT. WINE TASTING/STREET - NIGHT

PAUL
Carol and I are going to go dancing - we heard of a great place. Interested?

INEZ
Sure.

GIL
I don't want to be a party pooper but I just want fresh air.

INEZ
Oh come on - although Gil's not a dancer - he likes to sit and watch other people dance and make jokes about disorders of the central nervous system.

CAROL
I'll share Paul with you. I'M very democratic. And he's a marvelous dancer.

GIL
If it's okay with you, I'd really just like a little walk and to bed. We can do it another night.

INEZ
Well I can go, right?

GIL
You go?

INEZ
I'm not tired and I'm dying to dance. I'll just meet you back at the hotel.

PAUL
We'll drop her of course.

GIL
I - I - guess so...

PAUL
We'll drop you on our way.

GIL
No - No - I'll walk - I need air...

INEZ
You'll never find it.

GIL
I'll ask if I get lost...

INEZ
I hope we don't find you on a bench tomorrow morning.

PAUL
He'll be fine.

GIL
I'll be fine - have fun...

INEZ
I'm excited.

GIL
(as he saunters away correctly)
Have fun - have fun - you kids - I will drink in the Parisian night -

The others get into a waiting taxi.

We follow Gil a bit as he turns left, then right - then left -

CUT TO:

INT. TAXI - NIGHT

The three are having a fine time.

INEZ
Isn't it great we're all on holiday at the same time.

PAUL
Well, in New York you'll be living right near us. You said Sutton Place and we're Beekman Place.

CAROL
We can have some great times together. We belong to a marvelous tennis club and Paul says you play. Does Gil?

INEZ
I can't introduce him to tennis - Daddy's having the damndest time pressuring him to learn golf. - He devotes all his spare time to writing.

PAUL
Is he a good writer? Have you read his stuff? You must have.

INEZ
His old professors at school -

PAUL
If he wants I'd be glad to read his work and critique it for him.

INEZ
That's what he needs, to have it read by someone who really knows literature and wouldn't pull any punches. The problem is - when it comes to his writing he has no respect for anyone's opinion.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Gil walks street, obviously lost.

EXT. LOVELY SPOT/TBD - NIGHT

Gil wanders. Eventually he is at a lovely spot. Perhaps by the river, the bridge - or somewhere else but he's just wandering lost. Finally he looks at his watch.

Either by his watch or a nearby building clock, the hands move to exactly midnight. Perhaps midnight chimes somewhere.

At precisely that moment a car happens to pull up along side him. Inside are TWO MEN and TWO WOMEN - elegant - they have champagne and glasses and they pour from the open bottle and drink happily.

DOUG
(American)
Come on - get in.

GIL
Huh?

PHIL
(French accent)
Let's go - we're late.

The WOMAN beckons him in, in broken English.

GIL
You don't mean me?

DOUG
Yes - you - come on -

WOMAN
Oui - maintenant.

Gil gets in. They shut door and pull off.

CUT TO:

INT. CAR - NIGHT

GIL
Where are we going?

PHIL
The party. Where do you think?

GIL
You have the wrong person.

DENISE
(offering glass of wine)
Prennez du champagne - arrêtez d' être rigide.

GIL
Er - I've had a lot to drink tonight.

DOUG
The night is young - relax.

DENISE
Drink up.

He drinks, befuddled.

CUT TO:

EXT. LEFT BANK STREET - NIGHT

Car pulling up at some great old street. They all get out and take him inside to a party in progress.

INT. PARTY - NIGHT

There is a mixture of elegant plus bohemian types. In the background a MAN sits at the piano singing a Cole Porter tune. A WOMAN comes over to Gil.

ZELDA
You look lost.

GIL
You're American.

ZELDA
Good old Alabama. What do you do?

GIL
Oh I - I'm a writer - trying to be.

ZELDA
What do you write?

GIL
I'm working on a novel.

ZELDA
Oh yes? I'm Zelda by the way. Oh Scott - Scott come over here. Here's a writer from America.

SCOTT
(Scott joins)
Scott Fitzgerald, and who are you old sport?

GIL
I'm Gil Pen - oh you have the same name as -

SCOTT
As what?

GIL
Scott Fitzgerald?

SCOTT
Yes.

GIL
And you're -

ZELDA
Say, you have had a few, haven't you?

GIL
Th - that man at the piano... I thought I recognized -

ZELDA
Cole? Have you not met?

GIL
C-C-Cole Porter?

ZELDA
I always imagined myself writing lyrics, then I hear Cole's and they're so perfect.

GIL
I - but that's - I'm - he's -

SCOTT
What kind of books do you write?

GIL
I - I - I - I'm - I'm working on a - where am I?

SCOTT
I'm sorry - Don't you know the host? Some friends have made a little party for Jean Cocteau.

GIL
No.

ZELDA
I say it's a bore. Let's go to Bricktop's.

SCOTT
I'm with you, sweetheart. See if Cole and Linda want to go and ask Gerald and Sara - Coming with?

Gil stares open mouthed.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAR - NIGHT

Shot of group piled into period open top car tearing down a Parisian street.

CUT TO:

INT. BRICKTOP'S CLUB (OR TBD) - NIGHT

The group is watching someone like Josephine Baker. Gil is stunned by it all.

CUT TO:

INT. CLUB #2 - NIGHT

A Charleston is being played. Scott and Zelda finish dancing and return to table.

SCOTT
I cannot and will not go again.

ZELDA
Okay - your turn.
(getting Gil up)

GIL
I can't dance.

ZELDA
Everybody's a dancer when they're with me.

GIL
Yes but -

She's dragged him and he is soon doing the Charleston or whatever with her.

CUT TO:

INT. CAFE #3 - NIGHT

A little late night cafe, very bohemian. Scott, Zelda and Gil enter, the group having thinned out.

ZELDA
A bottle of bourbon.

SCOTT
(stops at another table)
Greetings and salutations. You'll forgive me - I've been mixing grain and grappa... This is Gil - Gil? Yes, Gil.

GIL
Gil Pender.

HEMINGWAY
Ernest Hemingway.

GIL
I - I - you're my - you're my idol -

HEMINGWAY
You liked my book?

GIL
Liked - loved - everything you wrote -

HEMINGWAY
(introduces his drinking partner)
Manolete - the bulls in the ring don't frighten Manolete - he's killed many brave ones. Fine brave bulls.

GIL
I'm sure - good bulls, true bulls...

HEMINGWAY
What are you drinking?

SCOTT
A double anything.
(to Zelda)
Where are you going?

ZELDA
(to Hemingway)
Did you read my story? What did you think?

HEMINGWAY
It began well - really well - then it became weak.

ZELDA
I might've known you'd hate it.

SCOTT
Zelda you're too sensitive.

ZELDA
You liked the story but he hates me.

HEMINGWAY
There was some fine writing but it was not fulfilled.

SCOTT
Ernest please - you make matters difficult.

ZELDA
I'm jumpy - I don't like the atmosphere here.
(to Manolete)
Where are you going?

MANOLETE
To meet friends at St. Germain...

ZELDA
I'm going with him.

SCOTT
Zelda -

ZELDA
If you're going to stay and drink here I'm going with the toreador.

SCOTT
(to a polite Manolete)
Get her back at a reasonable time.

They go.

HEMINGWAY
She'll drive you crazy, this woman.

SCOTT
She's exciting - and she has talent.

HEMINGWAY
This month it's writing, last month it was something else.
(MORE)

HEMINGWAY (cont'd)
You're a writer - you need time to write - not all this playing around - she's wasting you - because she's really a competitor - don't you agree?

GIL
Me? I just met -

HEMINGWAY
Speak up for Christ's sake. I'm asking you if you think my friend is making a tragic mistake.

GIL
Actually I don't know the Fitzgeralds that well -

HEMINGWAY
You're a writer - you make observations - you were with them all night.

SCOTT
Can we not discuss my personal life in public?

HEMINGWAY
She has him on yachts, at parties, jumping into swimming pools - you're wasting your talent.

SCOTT
You don't understand her.

HEMINGWAY
(to Gil)
She's jealous of his gift and it's a damn fine gift. It's rare. You like his work? You can speak freely.

SCOTT
Stop it.

HEMINGWAY
You like Mark Twain?

GIL
I do - very much.

SCOTT
I'm going to find Zelda. I'm not going to sit here and drink with this bully...
(stumbles out)

HEMINGWAY
He's a fine writer, Fitzgerald. You box?

GIL
No.

HEMINGWAY
What are you writing?

GIL
A novel.

HEMINGWAY
About what?

GIL
A man who works in a nostalgia shop.

HEMINGWAY
What the hell's a nostalgia shop?

GIL
Where they sell old things - memorabilia. Does that sound terrible to you?

HEMINGWAY
No subject is terrible if the story is true. If the prose is clean and honest and if it affirms courage and grace under pressure.

GIL
Would you do me the biggest favor in the world - I can't even ask...

HEMINGWAY
What?

GIL
Would you read it?

HEMINGWAY
Your novel?

GIL
It's only about four hundred pages - if you could just give me your opinion.

HEMINGWAY
My opinion is I hate it.

GIL
You do?

HEMINGWAY
If it's bad I'll hate it and if it's good I'll be envious and hate it. You don't want the opinion of another writer.

GIL
But there's no one I really trust to evaluate it -

HEMINGWAY
Writers are competitive.

GIL
I could never compete with you -

HEMINGWAY
You're too self-effacing - it's not manly. If you're a writer, declare yourself the best writer - but you're not the best as long as I'm around. Unless you want to put the gloves on and settle it.

GIL
No - no - that's okay -

HEMINGWAY
I won't read your novel but I'll tell you what I'll do.

GIL
Yes?

HEMINGWAY
I'll bring it over to Gertrude Stein. She'll read it and she'll give you an opinion a lot truer than mine. She'll tell you if you have a book or not.

GIL
You could have Gertrude Stein read my novel?

HEMINGWAY
Give it to me.

GIL
I have to get it. It's at the hotel.

HEMINGWAY
She gets back from Spain tomorrow.

GIL
(rises)
I'm so thrilled - my heart is beating. I'll go home and get it - I'll give it to you - I can't tell you what this means to me. To have Gertrude Stein read my novel - thank you, thank you -

He exits the place.

EXT. CAFE #3 - NIGHT

GIL
Calm yourself - get a grip, Gil - deep breaths - been quite a night - Hemingway - the Hemingway - Papa - where do I meet him - he never said -

Gil goes to return to the cafe - he can't find the door, nor the club facade. It's gone.

We are in the present and he searches the wall of a facade where he came out but he is in despair over the fact he can't find it.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL SUITE - DAY

Next morning. Gil and Inez probably dressing.

INEZ
Lucky you didn't go last night. You'd have hated the music and the crowd - but I had fun.

GIL
Er - you got in very late.

INEZ
Yes, we stayed out late - and then Paul and Carol met some friends and we all went for a drink. But you managed to find your way back to the hotel.

GIL
Uh-huh.

INEZ
What are you thinking? You seem in a daze.

GIL
If I told you I was with Ernest Hemingway and Scott Fitzgerald last night, what would you say?

INEZ
Is that what you were dreaming about? Your literary idols.

GIL
But if I wasn't dreaming -

INEZ
What does that mean?

GIL
If I told you I spent time with Hemingway and Fitzgerald and Cole Porter and Gerald and Sara Murphy -

INEZ
I'd be thinking brain tumor.

GIL
Can I tell you Zelda Fitzgerald is exactly as we've come to know her from articles and books - she's mercurial and moody and she does not get along with Hemingway - and Scott knows Hemingway's right about it but you can see how conflicted he is because he loves her -

INEZ
Right, right - and I dreamed we were married and we lived in a huge mansion with Daddy and Mom and Paul and Carol and you weren't a writer - I don't know what you did but you worked for Paul. I rarely remember my dreams but once in a while I have a very vivid one that seems real - er where's my cold cream - we should knock off the idle chatter because we're going to be late.

GIL
Actually I wanted to stay and work on my novel - it needs a little sprucing up.

INEZ
Is this how it's going to be when we're married? Obsessed even on vacation?

GIL
I just wanted to tweak a few things before Gertrude -

INEZ
I haven't got time to hear the plot.

GIL
No, no - I just -

INEZ
You can work on it later. Mom is taking us antiquing and it's a chance to get some beautiful pieces for our new apartment on her decorator's discount.

CUT TO:

INT. ANTIQUE STORE - DAY

Helen, Inez and Gil in antique store.

HELEN
Come look at this Inez - wouldn't it be perfect for the living room?

INEZ
What do you think, Gil?

GIL
What are they?

HELEN
Blackamoors.

GIL
What do they do?

HELEN
They page the drapes.

INEZ
I think they're divine. Mom has such a great eye.

GIL
Aren't drapes awfully heavy?

HELEN
I thought as long as we're dong the condo over I always wanted it to have a more formal look.

INEZ
The way you did that consulate? It was great.

HELEN
That was very formal Inez.

GIL
You don't see a more relaxed look? I'm a little messy - and if you like the feel of small statues, the place I work at has two great vintage doorstops of W.C. Fields and Mae West.

INEZ
I don't think so, Gil.

HELEN
I really have my eye on that armoire.
(to owner about mirrored old armoire)
Combien pour le armoire?

OWNER
Douze mille.

HELEN
(to Inez)
It's a steal at twelve thousand dollars.

GIL
Twelve thousand dollars?

HELEN
Oh wait, that's Euros so it's more -

INEZ
That is a little pricey for us, Mom.

HELEN
Well you've got to have an armoire. You're short closet space as it is and every month when Dad and I come we'll need the guest room closets so you can't use those.

INEZ
She's right, Gil.

GIL
But twelve G's - Euros - fifteen - I mean can't we find an armoire for a tad less. I mean who has an armoire?

HELEN
Cheap is cheap.

INEZ
(sotto seductively)
We can use it for my clothes and if we put it on the wall to the right of the bedroom fireplace we'll have those big mirrors right next to our bed.

GIL
Yes, yes - that does help amortize the twelve thousand. But I gotta tell you, I know your mother has a vision but her vision is going to send us to the poorhouse.

INEZ
Dad'll help us with a loan.

GIL
And it's not my taste - she's doing the place for Winston Churchill.

HELEN
What do you think of this harp?

INEZ
It's gorgeous.

GIL
Who plays the harp? Have you been keeping something from me?

HELEN
It's purely decorative - in the alcove.

GIL
A decorative harp in the apartment? I guess we can always use it to slice hard boiled eggs.

HELEN
It adds just the right note of charm.

INEZ
Where's your imagination?

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL SUITE - DAY

Gil is tweaking his novel.

CUT TO:

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Helen, John, Inez and Gil at another sumptuous dinner place. Wine, etc.

JOHN
The foie gras is superb.

INEZ
You hardly touched your dinner.

JOHN
Yes Gil, you seem a little nervous.

GIL
No - I'm - I ate...

HELEN
You didn't eat, you pushed the food around your plate to make it seem like you ate.

JOHN
Anyone up for a movie?

INEZ
I'm a little tired.

HELEN
I wouldn't mind seeing that one we passed today - on the Champs Elysee. The poster looked funny.

CUT TO:

INT. RESTAURANT/COAT CHECK - NIGHT

INEZ
You can go with them to the movies if you like but I'm not up to it.

GIL
(privately to Inez)
I want you to come with me.

INEZ
Come where?

GIL
One of the most amazing adventures of your life.

INEZ
Where?

GIL
Just hang in with me, okay?

INEZ
(as he retrieves manuscript)
Can I ask why you brought your novel to dinner?

GIL
You'll see - you'll see and your jaw will hang open.

CUT TO:

EXT. LOVELY SPOT/TBD - NIGHT

Gil and Inez walking the final steps to arrive at the exact spot he was picked up by the car the prior night. (Perhaps it was a bridge spot).

They wait for something.

INEZ
Let's go, Gil - I said I was exhausted. It's almost twelve.

GIL
Okay, okay - just hang in - hang in - it'll be worth it -

They wait.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. LOVELY SPOT/TBD - NIGHT

Some time later. Maybe a car or two comes by ala "North By Northwest" but nothing happens.

INEZ
I don't know what it is you're carrying on about but I'm out of here.

GIL
Inez.

INEZ
Taxi! - Look - you want to walk the streets and "drink in Paris by night" - go ahead. Just don't wake me when you get in...
(she gets in cab)

GIL
(to himself as he wanders)
She's right, Gil - I'd check with a neurologist. You're delusional. It's like those UFO idiots.
(MORE)

GIL (cont'd)
But it happened - alright - try and reason... You left the wine tasting - a little plastered yes - I walked - right here -

The clock begins to chime midnight.

GIL (CONT'D)
I remember the river - the clock struck midnight - I - the clock struck midnight! On the dot of midnight!

He looks at his watch which obviously confirms the chimes he hears.

The period car comes - the door opens.

PASSENGER
(beckons)
Hey - there you are -

GIL
I want to see Ernest Hemingway. I'm Gil Pender. We have a date.

PASSENGER
Hi Gil - John Dos Passos. Yes, he told me. He's at the Closerie De Lilo.

Car pulls off.

CUT TO:

INT. CLOSERIE - NIGHT

Gil is with Hemingway.

HEMINGWAY
The assignment was to take the hill. There were four of us. Five if you counted Vincente but he had lost his hand when a grenade went off and he couldn't fight as he could when I first met him and he was young and brave and the hill was soggy from days of rain and sloped down toward a road and there were many German soldiers on the road and the idea was to aim at the first group and if our aim was true we could delay them.

GIL
Weren't you scared?

HEMINGWAY
Of what?

GIL
Getting killed.

HEMINGWAY
You'll never write well if you fear dying. Do you?

GIL
It's by biggest fear.

HEMINGWAY
But it's something all men before you have done and all men will do.

GIL
Yes but nevertheless.

HEMINGWAY
There are only two subjects worth writing about - death and love.

GIL
Oh well I have both in my book -

HEMINGWAY
Have you ever made love to a truly great woman?

GIL
My fiance is very sexy.

HEMINGWAY
And when you make love to her you feel true and beautiful passion and you at least for that moment lose your fear of death.

GIL
I don't know about that -

HEMINGWAY
I believe that love that's true and real creates a respite from death.
(MORE)

HEMINGWAY (cont'd)
All cowardice comes from not loving or not loving well which is the same thing and when the man who is brave and true looks death squarely in the face like some rhino hunters I know or Manolete who is truly brave, it is because they love with sufficient passion to push death out of their minds till it returns as it does to all men and then you must make really good love again. Think about it - now let's have one more grappa and over to 27 Rue des Fleurus.

CUT TO:

INT. GERTRUDE STEIN'S PLACE - NIGHT

They enter.

HEMINGWAY
This is Gil Pender. He's a young American writer. I thought you two should know each other.

STEIN
I'm glad you're here. You can help decide which of us is right and which of us is wrong.

She leads them into other room, introduces Gil.

STEIN (CONT'D)
This is Gil -

GIL
Pender.

STEIN
Pablo Picasso.

They ad-lib greetings. Picasso speaks French and is with a beautiful girl - Adriana.

STEIN
I was just telling Pablo that this portrait doesn't capture Adriana. It has universality but no objectivity.

PABLO
Vous ne le comprenez pas correctment. Vous ne connaissez pas Adriana mais c'est tout ce qui la représente.

STEIN
No tu n'a pas raison. Look how he's done her - dripping with sexual innuendo. Carnal to the point of smoldering and yes she's beautiful but it's a subtle beauty - an implied sensuality.
(to Gil)
What is your first impression of Adriana?

GIL
(very taken)
.....Spectacular.

STEIN
Belle, mais plus subtil plus implicite, Pablo.

HEMINGWAY
You're right Gertrude - the lips and thighs take up too important a place in the picture - of course you can see why he's lost his objectivity.
(flirting with her)

STEIN
You've made a creation of Place Pigalle, a whore with volcanic appetites.

PABLO
Mais c'est comme elle est, si vous la connaissez.

STEIN
Yes - avec vous en prive - because she's your lover - but we don't know her that way - so you make a petit bourgeoise judgment and turn her into an object of pleasure. C'est plus comme une nature morte qu'on portrait. It's more like a still life than a portrait.

PABLO
(waves her off and goes to get a drink)
Je ne suis pas d'accord.

STEIN
(turning to Gil)
And what about this book of yours I've been hearing about?
(to Hemingway)
Have you read it?

HEMINGWAY
No, this I leave to you.

STEIN
(thumbing first page, she reads)
"Out of the Past was the name of the store and it's product consisted of memories. What was prosaic and even vulgar to one generation had been transmuted by the mere passing of years to a status at once magical and also camp."

ADRIANA
I love it already.

GIL
You're American.

STEIN
I'll start it tonight. But first we have something to talk about.

She collars Hemingway and they huddle to one side. Picasso has busied himself at a distant spot with a drink, sulking. This leaves Gil off with Adriana to chat.

GIL
Did my first sentence really hook you that strongly?

ADRIANA
Anything about nostalgia. I'm one of those people who's convinced she was born too late.

GIL
Me too.

ADRIANA
Too late right?

GIL
When would you have rather lived?

ADRIANA
Belle Époque Paris - perhaps as it was beginning or even a few years leading to it - Paris waking up to life - the painters and then the new styles - everything so beautiful - dinner at Maxim's every night...

GIL
I sense that you love Paris as much as I do.

ADRIANA
I'm taken with the mystique.

GIL
Yes, that's how I am. I always had a very romantic conception of Paris.

ADRIANA
But it lives up to the myth. I would say to fall in love in Paris is like falling in love in no other city.

GIL
Obviously we're two Americans who think alike - I mean you are and I am... American -

ADRIANA
San Francisco.

GIL
That's another great town. Great town. I was there a few times... so er - how long have you been dating Picasso? My god, did I say that?

ADRIANA
I'm sorry?

GIL
Oh - I - no, I didn't mean anything - you know - to pry...

ADRIANA
I came over here right out of high school to study fashion and - you don't want to hear this -

GIL
No, I do.

ADRIANA
I came over - my dad's friendly with Coco Chanel - and I was only supposed to be here a summer but I met this very gorgeous painter at a cafe - and I fell in love or thought I did. I couldn't believe he was Jewish with a name like Modigliani - and he was in love with someone but we had a little affair.

GIL
The painter Modigliani?

ADRIANA
You knew Amedeo?

GIL
By reputation.

ADRIANA
And through him I met Braque and we lived together for a while. I was his model and he introduced me to Pablo and things weren't going too well with George and Pablo was so smitten with me - one thing led to another...

GIL
Modigliani, Braque, Picasso - what a resume.

ADRIANA
I mean I don't kid myself. Pablo's married but they're on again, off again and I don't know how any woman can stay with him - he's so difficult.

GIL
Yes?

ADRIANA
For sure. We fight like cats and dogs. I mean he's great but he's very spoiled and never likes to leave the studio or travel, just work. But tell me about yourself. Have you come to Paris to write because these days so many Americans feel the need to get out?

GIL
Actually I'm visiting.

ADRIANA
Oh you should live here. It's a wonderful city for artists and writers.

GIL
Believe me, I want to but it's not that simple.

ADRIANA
Are you sure? That's what I thought but it turned out to go quite smoothly - or are you one of those people who complicates everything.

GIL
I'm afraid I am - I tend to be very logical - and so much has happened that defies logic.

ADRIANA
You have to trust your instincts. Look, Pablo and I would be glad to help you if you decided to stay. I could show you around and he knows everybody. And Ernest and Gertrude are great people. Ernest's very sexy, don't you think?

GIL
Hemingway? I'd guess so, yes...

ADRIANA
Here, let me give you my phone number and if you need anything, give me a ring.

GIL
I'd hate to disturb you - or Pablo if he's in the middle of creating a masterpiece.

ADRIANA
You won't disturb him - he could work through an earthquake. And I love sharing Paris with a fellow American who loves it like I do.

Hemingway and Stein return.

HEMINGWAY
Come, let's all go for a drink up at Montmartre.

PABLO
J'ai faim.

ADRIANA
Tu a faim parce que c'est deux heure et demi.

GIL
What time is it? Oh god - I'd love to but - I can't tonight.

ADRIANA
Oh, too bad, I'd have liked to have talked some more.

GIL
Yes - well...

STEIN
We'll discuss your book as soon as I finish it. Where can I reach you?

GIL
Oh that's okay - I'll drop by - it'll be easier for you - if that's okay.

STEIN
We run an open house.

ADRIANA
You sure you won't come?

GIL
I only wish I could but I can't - I'll call you. I will... oh god -

Hemingway, Picasso and Adriana are going off - Hemingway flirtatious with her.

HEMINGWAY
(teasing Picasso)
One of these days I plan to steal you away from this Spaniard who's great but no Miro.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOTEL - NIGHT

Gil returning.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT

Gil gets into bed with Inez. She's asleep and he lies awake thinking. He pinches himself to make sure he's awake.

CUT TO:

EXT. FLEA MARKET - DAY

Gil, Inez and Helen.

HELEN
It's a shame you two didn't come to the movies last night. We saw a wonderfully funny American film. I forget the name.

GIL
Wonderful but forgettable. I've seen that picture.

HELEN
I mean I know it was moronic and infantile and lacking any wit, coherence, or believability but John and I laughed in spite of ourselves.

INEZ
What time did you get in? I was dead asleep.

GIL
Not late. I find these midnight strolls are very good for me creatively - without the distractions of the day - I'll probably take another long walk tonight.

INEZ
We'll see. Oh how about this?

HELEN
Oh god Inez, you never know who wore it.

INEZ
But it's pretty. And I look good in hats, don't I, Gil?

GIL
Huh? Yes - always...

INEZ
It's too small.

HELEN
Look at this marvelous set of antimacassars.

INEZ
Yes.

As they're preoccupied, Gil is caught up by a man who plays some old 78 records on an old phonograph and he's playing the Cole Porter tune Cole was playing the other night.

INEZ
Gil - Gil - Gil?

GIL
Huh?

INEZ
I was asking you if you liked this teapot?

GIL
I'm a coffee man - you know that - I -

INEZ
You were in a reverie.

GIL
There's lots of stuff here that would be great for the store in New York.

INEZ
We have to talk about that silly store.

GIL
What?

INEZ
If you're going to work till you get established as a writer there's a lot better you can do.

GIL
Like what?

INEZ
Like letting Dad break you in at Global Entities.

GIL
I don't want to work at Global Entities - it would be joyless, time consuming, and I have no flair for finance.

INEZ
But your background in college was business.

GIL
To please my father - but I disliked it - and once I got up the nerve to try writing -

INEZ
I'm not saying give up writing - but until you hit it. When people ask me what my fiance does I say a writer - that's great - but when the details come out that you're unpublished and you keep afloat by selling old cap pistols and Joan Crawford cut-out books.

GIL
Nostalgia is a legitimate business. For some reason you have a notion that Out of the Past is some kind of embarrassing hole in the wall.

INEZ
It is a hole in the wall -

HELEN
Look at this, Inez. These decanters are marvelous.

GIL
I think I'll buy some of those old records.

INEZ
It's getting late and we're meeting Paul and Carol at another museum. There's a great exhibition.

GIL
Oh - Paul and Carol - I can't wait -

CUT TO:

INT. ART MUSEUM - DAY

Paul, Carol, Gil and Inez browse.

PAUL
I love the way the Fauves used color. See how cleverly he juxtaposes the reds and yellows. So expressionistic.

INEZ
I know exactly what you mean.

PAUL
Oh look at this fabulous Jawlenski. I love the sheer peasantness of his brush strokes.

INEZ
Isn't that interesting, Gil?

GIL
Yes, the peasantness. I like a good Eastern European peasant myself although I don't know what we'd talk about if we had one here.

CAROL
It's a great idea for an exhibition. The Female Soul.

PAUL
(coming to Picasso's portrait of Adriana)
Ah - here's a superb Picasso.

Gil is stunned.

PAUL (CONT'D)
If I'm not mistaken he painted this great neoclassical portrait of his French mistress Madeline Brissou in the twenties.

GIL
Er - I - I beg to differ.

PAUL
What?

GIL
If I'm not mistaken this was a failed attempt to capture a young American girl named Adriana - from San Francisco if my art history serves me - came to Paris to study costume design for the theatre. Believe she had a brief affair with Modigliani - then Braque - that's where Pablo met her - er Picasso. You'd never know if from this portrait but she's quite subtly beautiful.

INEZ
What have you been smoking?

GIL
Oh, and I'd hardly call the picture superb.
(MORE)

GIL (cont'd)
It's more of a petit bourgeoise statement of how Pablo er Picasso sees her, saw her - he's distracted by the fact she was a volcano in the sack.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOTEL - NIGHT

Inez, her parents and Gil pulling up to the their hotel in a taxi. They get out.

JOHN
We must remember that restaurant - the duck was wonderful.

INEZ
What was that wine? I couldn't stop drinking it.

GIL
What time is it?

JOHN
Eleven.

GIL
(to Inez)
I'm going to take a long, long walk by myself - my lead character needs fleshing out - I want some night air - and no distractions.

INEZ
(seductively aside to Gil)
Come up to bed. I'm in the mood to distract you.

GIL
Now?

INEZ
You'll be sorry if you miss this one.

He wavers.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT

Gil and Inez entering suite. She turns to him hotly.

INEZ
How did I know you'd decide this way.

GIL
Right.

He's moving fast, his idea is to get it done with her but fast and make midnight.

GIL
Why can I never say no to you?

INEZ
Because I buy the right kind of underwear.

GIL
Yes you do - and you take full advantage of it.

INEZ
Not so fast - What is this, a horse race? I'll meet you in bed in two minutes.

She exits - he is both drawn and agitated by the fact it's late.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL SUITE/BED - NIGHT

He's racing.

INEZ
Slow up - slow up - you know I like everything slow.

He goes at it with her. Much too fast.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT

After - post coital.

INEZ
I've never seen you go so fast. You broke the track record.

GIL
Was I speeding? You know how excited I get.

INEZ
We began at eleven and it's only eleven thirty.

GIL
Oh it's eleven thirty, already? I had planned to work. Is it okay if just this once we could skip cuddling time.

INEZ
It's okay with me - you're the one that usually needs the cuddling time.

GIL
No, I'm serious - I thought I'd prowl the boulevards and think about some rewrites.

INEZ
You never prowl the N.Y. streets at night and write.

GIL
Only because I value my life. Sleep well.

CUT TO:

EXT. LOVELY SPOT/TBD - NIGHT

The car comes as the clock strikes midnight. The door opens.

ALICE TOKLAS
I thought I'd find you here.

GIL
Alice -

ALICE TOKLAS
I'm heading back to the apartment...

Gil gets in.

ALICE TOKLAS (CONT'D)
I know Gertrude was reading your book and laughing out loud.

GIL
Laughing? It's a serious novel.

CUT TO:

INT. GERTRUDE STEIN'S PLACE - NIGHT

STEIN
I'm halfway through your book and I'm enjoying myself. You have a gift for character and you have a voice.

GIL
Yes?

STEIN
But I also have criticisms. We'll discuss it when I finish. You're welcome to stay. Archibald MacLeish is going to read some poems.

GIL
Er no - I'll just - could I use the phone?

STEIN
In the foyer.

INT. GERTRUDE STEIN'S PLACE/FOYER - NIGHT

Gil dials.

GIL
(on phone)
Hello, is Adriana there?

A man looking curiously like James Joyce crosses.

GIL (CONT'D)
Adriana? It's Gil - Gil Pender.

CUT TO:

INT. PICASSO'S STUDIO - NIGHT

ADRIANA
(on phone)
Oh hello - well yes - I am busy. The Fitzgerald's are throwing a party tonight and we're going.

CUT TO:

INT. GERTRUDE STEIN'S PLACE/FOYER - NIGHT

GIL
(on phone)
Oh - I thought you mentioned Pablo might be tied up with his work...

CUT TO:

INT. PICASSO'S STUDIO - NIGHT

ADRIANA
(on phone)
He is. Ernest Hemingway is taking me.

CUT TO:

INT. GERTRUDE STEIN'S PLACE/FOYER - NIGHT

GIL
(on phone)
Oh - that's right - I - he - I know you're fond of him...

CUT TO:

INT. PICASSO'S STUDIO - NIGHT

ADRIANA
(on phone)
Yes - Pablo will probably join later. But look, what are you up to? Well why don't you come along?
(MORE)

ADRIANA (cont'd)
Oh, it doesn't matter how you're dressed... we'll pick you up - what hotel did you say you were at?

CUT TO:

INT. GERTRUDE STEIN'S PLACE/FOYER - NIGHT

GIL
(on phone)
I'm at Gertrude Stein's place - yes - we were discussing my book. She's chatting with James Joyce... er... sure, I'll wait on the front steps... okay... if you're sure they won't mind.

He hangs up and tests what he just said to himself as he looks in the mirror.

GIL (CONT'D)
I'm at Gertrude Stein's place - James Joyce is in there eating an apple... I'm Gil Pender - from Great Neck - the cub scouts - how did this happen?

CUT TO:

INT. FITZGERALD'S PARTY - NIGHT

Typical bash they might have had. Adriana, Gil, Hemingway, all there but not necessarily together.

ADRIANA
(making her way to Gil)
Have you been having fun?

GIL
Yes, it turns out Anais Nin is a wonderful dancer.

ADRIANA
Oh I thought I saw you dancing with Djuna Barnes.

GIL
Yes Djuna's good too but she likes to lead.

Hemingway coming over now. He squeezes Adriana playfully flirtatious.

HEMINGWAY
Isn't this little San Francisco girl a movable feast? Mark my words - I'm going to steal you from that fugitive from Malaga one way or the other.

She's flattered. Manolete comes over.

MANOLETE
(to Hemingway)
Are you going to introduce me to this incredible creature?

HEMINGWAY
Aha - you see what I told you? You will attract all men because your beauty is true. Your face is fine and perfect with good contours and your shape slopes and flows like hills that are mysterious and beautiful.

MANOLETE
I'm waiting - or do you want her all to yourself.

HEMINGWAY
She's not mine unfortunately - she's Picasso's woman but like all men you see that her eyes are full of passion and that makes you drawn to them.
(to Adriana)
Between Manolete and myself who would you choose?

ADRIANA
You are both very impressive.

HEMINGWAY
But he has more courage. He faces death more directly and more often and if you chose him I would understand but be disappointed.

MANOLETE
Unfortunately for both of us she's chosen Pablo.

HEMINGWAY
Picasso - Pablo thinks women are only to paint or sleep with.

ADRIANA
And you?

HEMINGWAY
I think women are the equal of men in courage. Have you ever shot a charging wildebeest?

ADRIANA
Never.

HEMINGWAY
Have you ever hunted?
(to Gil)
Have you?

GIL
Only for bargains.

They all drink and laugh as Gil watches her; the cynosure of all these men. Zelda comes over to him.

ZELDA
Say - there you are - are you going to dance with me?

GIL
Me?

ZELDA
You did the other night and even though you said you couldn't dance you were the best partner I had all night.

GIL
Wouldn't you prefer to dance with your husband?

ZELDA
Scott's deep in conversation about whether to spend the rest of the summer in Antibes or on the Lido.

She takes him off to dance, at first fast, then we:

DISSOLVE TO:

Slow dancing. Gil dances but has his eye on Adriana who's having fun with Hemingway.

ZELDA
(noticing Gil staring)
You think he'll wind up with her?

GIL
Who?

ZELDA
Ernest - with Pablo's girlfriend. He's had his eye on her for the past month. Ever since Picasso brought her along on a weekend to Barcelona with Ernest and Gertrude.

GIL
Umm...

ZELDA
It's sad how fickle the human heart is...

GIL
Not always.

ZELDA
Look at the way my husband is mooning over that woman...

GIL
I'm sure they're just making the same simple small talk we are.

ZELDA
No, he's telling her how beautiful she is and how bored he's become with my moods and aspirations.

GIL
What are your aspirations?

ZELDA
To write and paint and dance. I want to do everything. It's just that I have no goddamned talent.

GIL
Hey - you're hard on yourself.

ZELDA
I'm sorry - life is so unfair.

GIL
Yes - I go into that in my book.

ZELDA
Can't you see how attracted to each other they are?

GIL
You have to consider the possibility that you're reading into it.

ZELDA
Why does nobody see it but me? I can't dance anymore. My skin hurts.

She goes off.

Gil now sees Picasso enter and go up to Adriana. The two of them are in an instant argument as Picasso is annoyed over something. They clearly quarrel.

She leaves and goes downstairs.

Gil follows to join her.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET NEAR PARTY - NIGHT

Gil can't find Adriana at first. He then spots her walking and runs up alongside her.

GIL
Oh hi -

ADRIANA
Hello.

GIL
You okay?

ADRIANA
Yes - well to tell the truth, no.

GIL
Can I help?

ADRIANA
No. I just get so mad at Pablo.

GIL
Yes?

ADRIANA
He's difficult. And possessive.

GIL
I'm sure he's jealous of your attention to Hemingway or the bullfighter.

ADRIANA
Modigliani flew into rages easily too. Painters are all emotion - like children.

GIL
Obviously you're drawn to temperamental geniuses.

ADRIANA
It's the age we live in - jazz, bootleggers in America - everybody in Paris trying to out create everyone else - of course if you're an artist people forgive you anything - that's where modern society's gone.

GIL
You're very interesting Adriana - more complicated than your sweet face indicates.

ADRIANA
I'm really not. I was just born at the wrong time.

GIL
I always say that.

ADRIANA
By the way - where are you heading?

GIL
Oh just walking - clearing my head.

ADRIANA
Well let's get a drink or something. It's early and I'm much too wide awake to go home. I can show you around if you like - I forget you're still just a tourist.

CUT TO:

EXT. MONTAGE/PARIS - NIGHT

Adriana is showing him around.

CUT TO:

EXT. PRETTY LOCATION - NIGHT

ADRIANA
This is the city at night at its most beautiful.

GIL
There's no aesthetic achievement, no book or painting, no symphony or sculpture that can rival a great city. Streets and boulevards and cafes as an art form.

CUT TO:

EXT. PLACE PIGALLE - NIGHT

Gil and Adriana are here with the street lined with prostitutes.

ADRIANA
See anything you like?

GIL
I'm ashamed to admit I'm attracted to all of them.

ADRIANA
Don't be ashamed. What else are you supposed to get aroused over, golf?

CUT TO:

EXT. RIVER - NIGHT

Gil and Adriana walking by the river.

GIL
Are you really interested in my book?

ADRIANA
I was caught up right off - I told you so.

GIL
Well as soon as I do a little more work I'll let you read it.

ADRIANA
I love that the main character sells memories.

GIL
Because he believes in his soul that life was better in a different era.

ADRIANA
How I would have loved to have lived in Paris around the turn of the century - a few years before - then the birth of the Belle Époque.

GIL
I'm bowled by what I see around me now - here - tonight.

ADRIANA
No - the women's clothes, the horses and carriages on the Champs Elysee - that's where I want to be.

GIL
Not here?

ADRIANA
I know - my life should be fine - I'm the mistress of a great genius -

GIL
But?

ADRIANA
But when Manolete took my hand my heart started beating - and when Hemingway teases me I blush from guilt - so can I really love Pablo?

GIL
I will say it's a far cry from the hills and trolley cars of San Francisco.

ADRIANA
Maybe I just haven't met the right man yet. Maybe he won't be an artist - maybe that's all just my ego, my attraction always to the tortured geniuses - maybe my life would be more content with a less complex person.

GIL
Say - what is that?

They see a distraught woman contemplating jumping into the river. Upon running to her, it's Zelda.

ADRIANA
Oh gosh! My god - what are you doing?

ZELDA
Scott was talking intimately all night with a very beautiful German woman - she's a psychiatrist - but it was so clear from the look on their faces they were talking about me and he was drawn to her.

ADRIANA
That woman is not a psychiatrist - she's a fashion photographer and she's happily married.

ZELDA
No.

ADRIANA
Yes. I know her.

ZELDA
Oh god - is that true? Have I so misconstrued it?

GIL
You're trembling Mrs. Fitzgerald - er Zelda...

ADRIANA
My god, Zelda - you always imagine the worst.

ZELDA
It all seemed so clear and real. I'm sorry for acting so crazy - I'm a mess inside.

GIL
Take this.
(pill)

ZELDA
What is this?

GIL
A Valium - it'll relax you.

ADRIANA
You carry medicine?

GIL
Only since Inez and I became engaged. I've had these anxiety attacks - I'm sure after the wedding they'll subside.

ZELDA
I never heard of Valium.

GIL
Er - it's the pill of the future.

ADRIANA
You didn't say you were getting married.

GIL
In the fall.

ZELDA
Can you accompany me to my apartment?

ADRIANA
Of course. I should be getting home too.

ZELDA
The pill is starting to work.

GIL
I'll try and score some for you.

CUT TO:

EXT. PICASSO'S STUDIO - NIGHT

Later. Gil and Adriana having dropped Zelda have walked home to where she lives with Pablo.

ADRIANA
This is it.

GIL
Oh - okay... well thanks for a great time.

ADRIANA
Thank you. And good luck with your book - and your wedding.

GIL
You'd like Inez - she has a sharp sense of humor - and she's sexy - not that we agree on everything.

ADRIANA
But the important things.

GIL
No actually we don't agree on the important things - but I'm going to walk and see who's over at the cafe - Good night.

CUT TO:

INT. CAFE #3 - NIGHT

Gil sits there and drinks. Salvadore Dali comes over and sits with him.

DALI
We met the other night, at the Fitzgerald's party.

GIL
Yes I remember - Dali.

DALI
Dali - yes.
(to waiter)
A bottle of red wine.

Waiter goes.

DALI (CONT'D)
I just came from Cocteau's studio - I told him my idea for a rhinoceros painting - the shape - you like the shape of the rhinoceros?

GIL
Me? I guess.

DALI
I could paint your look now - sad eyes - big lips - melting over hot sand - with one tear - yes - and Christ's face in the tear -

GIL
Do I look that sad? I'm in a very perplexing situation.

DALI
Everyone is in a perplexing situation - to be or not to be - this is the ultimate perplexing question - you agree? Ah - here they are -

Bunuel, Max Ernst and Man Ray enter and the table enlarges as they sit.

They all ask Gil his name.

GIL
Gil Pender.

DALI
Pender - Pen-der - Pen-derrr - and I am Da-li. Pender is in a perplexing situation.

GIL
It sounds so crazy when I say it and you'll think I'm drunk but I'm from a different time - a whole other era - the future - and I pass from the two thousandth millennium to here - a car picks me up - I slide through time -

MAN RAY
Exactly correct - you inhabit two worlds - so far I see nothing strange.

GIL
And in one life I'm engaged to marry a woman I love - at least I think I love her. Christ, I'm supposed to love her if I'm marrying her.

DALI
Love - the word love - love - the word love is the same as the word rhinoceros - the rhinoceros makes love by mounting the female - but is there a difference in beauty between two rhinoceroses?

MAN RAY
And why are you perplexed?

GIL
Because I met another woman in your time zone - your era - now - the present - which for me is the past - the past I long for.

MAN RAY
You long for the woman or the past?

GIL
Both. And they're both impossible.

ERNST
Why are they impossible?

GIL
Well the past is the past, is the past.

DALI
He sounds like Gertrude.

ERNST
The past is also the present.

GIL
In a dream - which is fine for you because you're surrealists.

ERNST
Who is the woman?

GIL
Just a beautiful American girl I fell instantly in love with but men greater than me, more profound artists - more courageous men are my competition.

DALI
I see you with Christ - he is smiling while you are crucified on the heavy wooden cross of self-doubt.

BUNUEL
Two loves from different periods of time - I see a movie here.

GIL
It's not physically possible to live in the past.

MAN RAY
Any why not?

GIL
Because we're not talking dreams or Dada - my life is real.

ERNST
You can never let that stand in the way of anything.

MAN RAY
Real life is as dream-like as any dream.

DALI
Time is in the mind. Time melts - the watches melt - the hands of the clock melt...

GIL
No - time is real and vicious - not just indifferent but malevolent.

MAN RAY
I don't see the problem here. You're too rooted in reality.

ERNST
I'll give you the manifesto we're working on. It will change how you see life.

MAN RAY
Of course if the woman doesn't love you or loves someone else the problem is not time but sex appeal.

GIL
She can have her pick of lovers and why would she want me and I'm engaged and -

BUNUEL
I see a movie.

ERNST
I see a painting.

DALI
I see a rhinoceros.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL SUITE - DAY

Next morning. Room service breakfast.

INEZ
Did you get much work done last night?

GIL
Er - some - yes - I'm beginning to think my book may be too realistic - that I've missed some chances to let my imagination run wild and not be so damn logical...

INEZ
Uh-huh...

GIL
Of course I want to hear what Gertrude thinks -

INEZ
What'd you say?

GIL
Oh nothing.

INEZ
Your mind is a millions miles away. What are you thinking?

GIL
If two people love each other why is the act of marriage necessary?

INEZ
It legalizes everything.

GIL
You can't legalize love.

INEZ
As you know there's more to a lifetime partnership than just love and it needs to be set down in a contract.

GIL
It does kind of undercut the romance.

INEZ
I don't know. Weddings and commitment can be very romantic.

GIL
I guess if the chemistry is right.

INEZ
Shouldn't we be getting dressed?

GIL
C'mere -

INEZ
(she does)
We'll be late.

GIL
(fondling her)
I don't want a private tour of the Opera House today. I don't enjoy private tours. Unless it's of your anatomy. Let's just the two of us wander the streets and see the shops and houses and all the Parisian faces.

INEZ
Mom went to a lot of trouble to arrange it, Gil. And I want to learn about the Opera House.
(MORE)

INEZ (cont'd)
Look, if you're bored with guided tours I'll see if Paul and Carol want to come with Mom and me.

GIL
Let's stay in bed this morning. You look good in this French light -

INEZ
We have our whole life for that. Right now we're in Europe thanks to Mom and Dad I might add. I enjoy my parents, not like you.

GIL
I like my parents but at Christmas time and only if the presents are cash.

INEZ
Look I'm not going to force you. Stay home and work - or walk the streets and think. I don't ever want it said I manipulate you.

CUT TO:

INT. MODERN MUSEUM - DAY

Gil stands in front of Picasso's picture of Adriana.

Presently he sees the guide girl who was showing them all around when they came previously.

GIL
I'd like to ask you a question about this painting.

GUIDE
Yes?

GIL
Not as an art expert but more as a woman - what is your impression of the subject of the picture?

GUIDE
The painting is not one of Picasso's best. Perhaps because he was too taken with the woman. Just as a guess I'd say she's beautiful and perhaps a little lost. Her sexuality is in her vulnerability.

GIL
Beautiful - vulnerable - yes.

GUIDE
I remember you. You were the group with the talkative gentleman who seemed to know it all.

GIL
And you put him in his place.

GUIDE
I could tell you didn't like him.

GIL
How?

GUIDE
You were rolling your eyes when he spoke.

GIL
Look - you're a perceptive French woman. I need some advice.

GUIDE
Why? Are you thinking of buying a painting?

GIL
No - no - personal advice. Do you get a break?

GUIDE
I get fifteen minutes for coffee in one hour.

GIL
How do you like your coffee?

CUT TO:

EXT. TBD - DAY

Gil and the guide at some exterior spot as they drink from containers and he confides in her.

GIL
Here's my problem and I'd like a woman's take. I met some woman that I just became very smitten with.

GUIDE
Uh-huh.

GIL
Alright let me put it this way - I'm engaged to be married.

GUIDE
I know.

GIL
How?

GUIDE
I met your fiance.

GIL
When? Oh that's right, we were all together.

GUIDE
She's not for you.

GIL
What?

GUIDE
It was easy to tell.

GIL
It was?

GUIDE
There was no - no - pas de alchimie, you know? Considering she's your fiance she was more starry eyed over the pedantic man.

GIL
He is pedantic - and she certainly seems to be impressed by him.

GUIDE
Qui est l'autre femme? Who is the other woman?

GIL
Her names' Adriana. Right now she's living with Picas-- with a Spaniard - er he paints - fairly well...

GUIDE
Yes - and does she love him? Or you?

GIL
Well I hardly think, me. But we've just met. See, another very gifted man is in love with her. But all the men who meet her fall in love with her. Do you know Ernest Hemingway's writing?

GUIDE
Of course.

GIL
Well this guy writes just like him... I mean I can't compete with these guys. What the hell am I, a wannabe novelist...

GUIDE
A what?

GIL
I'm working on a novel... this lady I respect says it's promising... she's a real good judge...

GUIDE
But without even meeting Adriana I can tell you love her more than the woman you're engaged to marry.

GIL
And you think Inez is wrong for me - my fiance?

GUIDE
You're engaged to marry her and yet you're in a dilemma over another woman. Doesn't that tell you something?

GIL
There's another big problem I can't tell you about.

GUIDE
What?

GIL
I don't know whether to call it an age difference - or a problem of geography - I'm so messed up.

GUIDE
I have to go but without knowing any more than I know, I think if you don't follow your heart you will regret it.

GIL
You think in the end love conquers all?

GUIDE
It does not, monsieur - but it's one of the only things we have to kill the pain - love is second only to aspirin.

GIL
If you could have lived in any era, which would you choose?

GUIDE
I don't know. I never thought about it.

CUT TO:

EXT. LOVELY SPOT/TBD - NIGHT

The car pulls up - chauffeur driven as always with a man in the back.

TOM
Come.

GIL
(gets in)
Thanks for stopping. Gil Pender.

TOM
Tom Eliot.

GIL
Tom Eliot? Tom - Stearns - Eliot? T - S - Eliot?

TOM
Why are you staring at me?

GIL
Wow - what a time to be alive?

TOM
Really? I can think of others I would have been happier in.

GIL
Really?

TOM
Wouldn't you agree that modern man is hollow?

GIL
Yes but at least this generation is vital and creative.

TOM
To me it's exactly as Gertrude Stein said - we are a lost generation.

GIL
Oh no - you should appreciate it because it won't always be like this.

TOM
Yes - well - 27 Rue des Fleurus.

Car stops and lets him out.

TOM (CONT'D)
If you run into Ezra Pound tell him he owes me forty francs.

CUT TO:

INT. GERTRUDE STEIN'S PLACE - NIGHT

Gil entering Stein house. Someone other than Gertrude admits him like Toklas.

TOKLAS
Gertrude's in the study.

GIL
May I just make one quick phone call?

TOKLAS
Of course.

She goes.

He dials, rings for a while, when he gets no answer he thinks, hangs up, goes inside. Picasso is there in a dour mood.

STEIN
Oh Pender - I'll get to your book in a moment. I finished it. We're just in the middle of a little personal crisis.

GIL
I didn't mean to intrude.

STEIN
No, it's no secret. Adriana has left Pablo and has flown to Africa with Ernest Hemingway.

GIL
What?

PABLO
Je savais qu'elle avait le béguin pour ce venteur. Nous nous somme dispute a ce sujet.

STEIN
Je suis sur qu'elle vous reviendra dévoué.
(English to Gil)
She'll be back to him - the sound of hyenas every night when you're trying to sleep gets on your nerves pretty quickly if you're a city girl.

GIL
She's in Africa?

STEIN
Every young girl in town thinks sleeping with the great white hunter in Kenya would be divine till the lions and mosquitos and the dysentery sets in. She'll be back, Pablo. Elle va revenir.

PABLO
Je ne me remettrais pas avec elle. J'ai pris la décision de retourner au près d'une femme.

STEIN
You'll take her back - she's young, she's beautiful, she's special. Don't you agree, Gil Pender?

GIL
Yes, she's special.

STEIN
Now about your book. Very unusual indeed. In a way it's clearly science fiction - fiction with all the futuristic devices - television sets, supersonic flight - and yet it's not typical science fiction - it's unique. Nevertheless you have to get rid of all that technology - what's good about your book are the characters - the human questions - love - mortality - nobody cares about the technology, they care about the human heart. We all fear death and question our place in the universe. Unfortunately your book lapses into easy pessimism. I was having this conversation with Alberto Giacometti the other day - you know Alberto?

GIL
Er - his work.

STEIN
It's the artist's job not to succumb to despair but to find an antidote to awful reality. But your voice is clear and lively - don't be such a defeatist.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET/TBD - NIGHT

Gil on street holding his manuscript. He is looking at a romantic spot he visited with Adriana.

GIL
(to himself)
Okay Gil - you'll rewrite your book - Gertrude Stein was right - she's only telling you what you feared was wrong with your book in your heart... as for Adriana - too much against it - forget her - go write - work is even better than aspirin.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL SUITE - DAY

Gil writing away next day or so.

Inez enters with shopping packages, fashionable.

INEZ
You still writing?

GIL
I'm deep into my book. Being in Paris has inspired me to make some radical changes.

INEZ
I think you just like the idea of saying you wrote your book here - the expatriate.

GIL
Yes, I would like to say I finished my first novel in Paris.

INEZ
I don't know what this passionate romance you have with the French is.

GIL
Can we talk a minute?

INEZ
First I want to show you what I bought.

GIL
Okay, but then -

INEZ
Yes - and I have something to tell you.

GIL
For someone who's not enamored of Pais you certainly do enough shopping here.

INEZ
Oh Daddy is taking you to play golf with him on the weekend.

GIL
I can't play golf.

INEZ
That's why he's paying for your lessons. It'll be fun for you. He'll show you how to hit and the fundamentals. Daddy's a good teacher. And you'll meet his business partners.

GIL
Inez -

INEZ
(changed and models some sexy underclothes)
How do I look?

GIL
Well - very good.

INEZ
You like this camisole with this garter belt?

GIL
Inez -

INEZ
I knew you'd respond to it - it's classy but dirty. How about with this?

GIL
You certainly know how to distract a writer.

INEZ
What are you implying? That you don't like this?

GIL
Inez - I want to talk to you about our marriage.

INEZ
I'm not moving to Paris if that's what's on your mind.

GIL
No, I know.

INEZ
Before you get into one of your long winded speeches on how you don't want to settle in Connecticut - I think I should share with you that I missed my period.

GIL
What?

INEZ
And I'm usually so consistent.

GIL
Well how could that happen?

INEZ
Look, I've been thinking about it.

GIL
I always said you can't rely on a diaphragm. You should be on the pill.

INEZ
I don't like the pill. I'm in that small minority of women where the pill reduces my sexual appetite. You don't want that, do you?

GIL
Oh Jesus... Did you forget to put it in? Or was it tilted or something?

INEZ
Look - you know I want a large family - so if it happens, it happens. Jesus, we'll be married soon so it's all highly legal - of course there won't be room in the condo so we'll have to look around in Westport or Darien sooner than we planned. Now what did you want to tell me?

GIL
A kid so fast and Connecticut?

INEZ
(presses against him, her usual routine)
I'm going to take a hot shower. We can discuss it when I come out.

GIL
Inez - you use your sexuality to manipulate me. Don't think I don't know.

INEZ
(annoyed)
I'm getting tired of hearing how I control you - if you'd rather not sleep with me, don't. And don't give me a hard time about tonight. We're taking Carol and Paul to L'Amis Louie. It's Paul's favorite restaurant and it's our night - they paid last time.
(suddenly seductive)
But see how you feel when I come our of the shower.

She goes off. He looks at her, he's a bit lost.

CUT TO:

INT. L'AMIS LOUIE - NIGHT

Gil, Inez, Carol and Paul.

PAUL
My theory is they baste the chicken in lard. How else could it taste so good.

CAROL
When we get back to New York I have to go on a diet.

INEZ
Me too.

PAUL
What shall we do after dinner?

CAROL
I wanted to walk around Place Pigalle and look at all the hookers.

INEZ
That could be interesting. You want to, Gil? Or are you planning on going off by yourself to think and churn out some more pages that you then tear up in a frenzy.

GIL
No - not tonight. Even I need a break.

INEZ
Gil says the city inspires him.

CAROL
Well you've covered every inch of it - you must know some good spots.

GIL
Yes - I know some - one great one.

INEZ
Well share it with us.

GIL
It's Paris at it's most romantic and beautiful.

PAUL
Well - I'm always ready to be enlightened.

GIL
I just hope I remember where it is.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREETS TO LOVELY STREET/TBD - NIGHT

Gil is taking them the exact same way Adriana took him to a lovely street or sight.

INEZ
How much further is this place, I'm getting tired.

GIL
Right around that corner.

PAUL
This has been quite an expedition.

GIL
It's worth it.

INEZ
And how did you find out about it?

GIL
I came upon it on my walks. It's pretty and romantic. It's what Paris is all about.

They turn the corner as he did with Adriana but the view hasn't held up over the years and is now a big industrial building.

PAUL
What is this?

GIL
Well it was -

INEZ
Are you kidding, Gil?

GIL
No, I -

INEZ
What, you dragged us all the way here for what?

PAUL
This is not your idea of a joke, is it?

GIL
No - no - it's so built up.

INEZ
Built up? Since you saw it a few nights ago?

CAROL
We should've gone to Place Pigalle to see the whores.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT

Gil and Inez entering suite.

INEZ
How embarrassing - they must think I'm marrying a clown.

GIL
I made a mistake. I'm sorry. If you give me a pistol I'll go in the other room and do the honorable French thing.

INEZ
I just didn't want you to look foolish in front of Paul and Carol. I don't mean to blow up. Let's turn in. We're both tired. I'm glad this vacation is almost over and we'll be back home soon.

He is sad.

CUT TO:

INT. STORE - DAY

Inez and her mother shopping.

HELEN
If it turns out you're pregnant we can move the wedding date up. Just to avoid the look of you out to here in that beautiful gown Vera Wang designed.

INEZ
Gil is not going with us to Mont St. Michele this afternoon.

HELEN
Why not?

INEZ
Why do you think? Rewrites. He says Picasso never left his studio. I said, Gil, you have nothing in common with Picasso. He doesn't want to sleep over at St. Michele.

HELEN
Well he's going to miss one of the great sights.

INEZ
Now that he knows we're almost ready to go home he's working extra hard. For some reason he feels compelled to do a lot of changes on his book while we're still here.

HELEN
Yes, but the minute we go to Mont St. Michele he'll manage to take a break from work and visit the flea market to rummage through junk.

INEZ
I told him we'd see him tomorrow when we get back to Paris.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL SUITE - DAY

Gil writing. He finally stops.

CUT TO:

EXT. FLEA MARKET - DAY

Gil browsing. He listens to the old phonograph recordings.

GIL
How much? Combien?

DEALER
Twenty Euros.

GIL
Twenty?

DEALER
Dix-huit.

GIL
Done.

He pays. Takes album. Wanders.

CUT TO:

EXT. FLEA MARKET - DAY

Gil looking at some old stuff.

CUT TO:

EXT. FLEA MARKET - DAY

Gil at a place that has a bin of various old books more pretty than great - the kind people buy for the binding or plates.

He picks up a pretty bound but totally wrecked book in the inside. It is slim, leather, torn up.

He reads the title page in hand writing. It reads: "This diary belongs to Adriana Jordan."

He is stunned. Almost all of it is unreadable and ripped off. Still, he reads. We hear her voice do the reading.

ADRIANA (V.O.)
That Paris exists and anyone could choose to live anywhere else in the world will always be a mystery to me.

Gil turns pages.

ADRIANA (V.O.)
(continuing)
Dinner with Pablo and Henri Matisse. Pablo is the greater artist although Matisse is the greater painter.

CUT TO:

EXT. OUTDOOR CAFE - DAY

Gil brought the diary and is reading it at another spot, perhaps at a cafe, over coffee.

ADRIANA (V.O.)
(as Gil reads)
Paris in the summer - what it must have been like to sit opposite one's lover at Maxim's in it's heyday.

Gil thumbs as pages are torn and text cuts off.

ADRIANA (V.O.)
(continuing)
I am in love with a young American writer I just met named Gil Pender.

His eyes widen.

ADRIANA (V.O.)
(continuing)
That immediate magic one hears about happened to me. I know that both Picasso and Hemingway are in love with me but for whatever inexplicable reasons the heart has, I am drawn to Gil. Certainly it is not his looks. As always in this sad life he is about to marry a woman named Inez and perhaps it's just as well I accept Hemingway's offer to go to Africa. Life with Pablo is too full of conflict and I am suffocating under his genius. Why I need to go from one man to another is my weakness. Africa and Hemingway would also get Gil off my mind.

Gil bolts to his feet.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT

Gil is sprucing up. He douses himself with aftershave, checks clock. It's eleven PM.

He goes to Inez's jewelry box and picks out art nouveau earrings he knows Adriana would like. He grabs a box and gift wraps it quickly.

Maybe it comes in a blue velvet box and he finds some colored paper.

He gives a final check to himself and opens door to leave, running smack into Inez and both her parents, home from their trip prematurely.

GIL
Ohmigod! What are you doing back?

INEZ
Daddy got chest pains.

GIL
Really?

JOHN
I'm sure it's indigestion.

HELEN
Well we can't take a chance.

INEZ
Daddy had an angioplasty three years ago.

JOHN
They put a balloon in me.

HELEN
(phone)
Yes - I want the hotel doctor - suite 818.
(she trails off)

INEZ
Why are you so dressed up?

GIL
Me? No - I was just writing.

INEZ
You put on cologne to write?

GIL
I took a break and showered. I think better in the shower. All those positive ions.

INEZ
We were halfway to Mont. St. Michele and Daddy started to look pale.

GIL
That's terrible.

INEZ
We turned right around.

GIL
No - sure - is there anything I can get you, John?

JOHN
I'm fine. I'm sure it's the beef bourguignon.

GIL
I have a dop kit with any medicine you might need. I mean I don't have Digitalis but Tums -

INEZ
What's this.
(picking up gift)

GIL
(grabs it from her)
It's nothing - nothing -

INEZ
What is that? It's a present.

GIL
Yes - yes... it is. Because it's gift wrapped... but er - you're not supposed to see that - it's a surprise.

INEZ
You got me something?

GIL
It's nothing great - from the flea market.

INEZ
Let me open it.

GIL
No! No - not now... I got it for - I mean to give it to you at a special dinner - just leave it...

INEZ
Now I'm dying of curiosity. If it's jewelry I hope it's my taste - not like the moonstone necklace.

GIL
You didn't like the moonstones? They're understated yet elegant -
(to Helen)
Don't you always say that, ha, ha...

HELEN
Cheap is cheap is what I always say.

INEZ
You never saw the necklace he got me. I've never actually worn it. You'll see why immediately.

Opens her jewelry box, holds up moonstones.

GIL
I thought you'd like their simplicity.

INEZ
That's just it, they're too simple.

HELEN
I agree.

INEZ
Hey - where are my art nouveau earrings?

HELEN
They're not there?

INEZ
Where are they?

GIL
You probably didn't pack them.

INEZ
I've worn them here.

GIL
I guess you lost them. They probably dropped off.

INEZ
Both of them? And my ears are pierced.

HELEN
I told you to keep everything in the hotel safe.

INEZ
You think it was the maid?

HELEN
It's always the maid.

INEZ
I remember seeing them there this morning.

HELEN
I would report the theft right away.

INEZ
I'll bet it was that maid. She was so snotty yesterday about turning out the beds.

She goes to phone.

GIL
Gee I wouldn't jump to any conclusions. I mean an accusation of theft.

INEZ
(phone)
I want to report a theft. I'd like the house detective to please come to room 818.

GIL
Oh god -

INEZ
(hangs up)
I didn't like that maid from the first day, didn't I say that?

Door rings.

GIL
The maid was very sweet.

INEZ
(opening door, doctor is there)
Right. Take the side of the help as usual. Yes?

DOCTOR
I'm Dr. Gerard.

HELEN
Come in - he's right there...

JOHN
I'm fine.

HELEN
He's had an angioplasty.

Amidst the ad-lib moment, Gil has managed to secure a private spot and has swiped the box. He's torn it open and removing earrings, runs into the room with them.

GIL
Look! Look! Are these what you're missing?

INEZ
Where did you find them?

GIL
They were in the bathroom.

INEZ
The bathroom?

GIL
Right out on the sink.

JOHN
I was in the bathroom, I didn't see them.

GIL
Well you're under stress...

INEZ
Why the hell would they be in the bathroom?

GIL
Maybe you thought you put them away and left them out or dropped them, and the maid found them and left them out where you could see them easily.

INEZ
I didn't drop them or leave them out...

GIL
The main thing is they're not stolen.

DOCTOR
We'll send you for some tests but I think that you are right and this is only indigestion.

JOHN
See. Incidentally, it was very nice of you to come over so late.

HELEN
Yes - it's midnight.

Gil is disappointed.

Door rings and Inez opens it. The security guys enter.

DETECTIVE
You're having some trouble?

GIL
No - no monsieur - it's okay - she found her earrings - it's okay - it's okay -

CUT TO:

EXT. TBD - DAY

Next day, Gil and Inez.

INEZ
I have good news and good news.

GIL
You're not pregnant.

INEZ
I'm pregnant.

GIL
Oh - and the other good news?

INEZ
All Daddy's tests are fine. It was not his heart. So - he doesn't have to cancel his golf with you.

GIL
It doesn't make sense to me - you're always so careful about the diaphragm.

INEZ
You don't seem very excited about getting an early start on our family.

GIL
Inez -

INEZ
Mom wants to move up the wedding and she's right. There's no real reason to wait so long anyhow is there?

He looks forlorn.

CUT TO:

INT. THEATRE - NIGHT

Movie in progress. Either L'Âge D'or or Une Chien Andalou.

Gil, Inez, Paul and Carol at some little theatre on the left bank.

CUT TO:

EXT. THEATRE - NIGHT

Gil, Inez, Paul and Carol exiting theatre.

PAUL
The surrealists were frequently witty but one is always tempted to stand up in the cinema and yell - fraud!

GIL
You don't enjoy Bunuel?

PAUL
Once in a while although I have to say his genius escapes me more often than not.

CAROL
Where shall we go? It's only ten-thirty.

PAUL
Shall we try Aberkamp? It's supposed to be very in.

INEZ
I'm always up for an in place.

GIL
Er -

INEZ
I know - you want to work -

GIL
Please understand -

PAUL
Understand? We were counting on it. No, ha... ha... but I'm dying to read this great American masterpiece you're laboring over.

INEZ
Great French masterpiece. I'm not at all tired tonight. I won't wake you when I get in.

GIL
And if I get in later I won't wake you. I'm at an impasse with the plot and I'll just stroll and think it out or get a coffee at a cafe and make notes ala Samuel Beckett.

PAUL
A very over-rated writer. I'm not saying Malone Dies didn't have some moments. Taxi!

CUT TO:

EXT. LOVELY SPOT/TBD - NIGHT

Gil getting into car at the enchanted spot. The car pulls off.

Shot of car arriving at Gertrude Stein's. Gil exits.

CUT TO:

INT. GERTRUDE STEIN'S PLACE - NIGHT

Gil entering. Stein sits there judging a painting - the painter is present.

STEIN
Gil Pender, Henri Matisse.

GIL
My god - I'm honored.

STEIN
Il est très honoré.

MATISSE
Je suis enchanté de vous rencontrer.

STEIN
(to Matisse)
C'est l'un de vos meilleurs jusqu'à présent. Je parlai a Leo. Je pense qu'il souhaite l'acheter.

Matisse is delighted, goes about his business there as she turns to Gil.

STEIN
I was just telling him we may buy this one for our personal collection.

GIL
(half to himself)
Why don't I buy one? I couldn't go wrong - but how's it possible - I should have paid more attention in physics class...

STEIN
Well?

GIL
Oh er - I brought a rewrite of the first few chapters of my book and was hoping you would tell me if you thought I was on the right track.

STEIN
Leave it with me.

GIL
Er - have you heard from Hemingway?

STEIN
Oh yes, they've been back for days. The trip didn't work out. I knew they wouldn't hit it off.

GIL
Really?

STEIN
I realize Ernest talks big but when they're under the African stars I don't know just how well he really delivers in the sleeping bag.

GIL
Where is she?

STEIN
Where else, back with Picasso.

GIL
She's not happy with Picasso. He's not even faithful to her.

STEIN
I can't keep track of Pablo and his women. I just know Adriana chooses to be the mistress of this very difficult man.

GIL
I'll call them.

STEIN
They're out. Pablo took her to the surrealist's ball. All those brilliant lunatics took over Deyrolles.

GIL
Deyrolles - the cab driver will know.

On the way out, he passes Ezra Pound.

GIL
Oh Mr. Pound - T.S. Eliot says you owe him forty francs.

CUT TO:

INT. SURREALIST'S BALL - NIGHT

Ball in progress. It's what you'd think the young surrealists would do for a big bash. Amidst the regular displays at this place are the bar and guests and music and any other touch we might think of.

Gil threads crowd and finally finds Adriana.

ADRIANA
Oh - what are you doing here?

GIL
I came to find you.

ADRIANA
You did?

GIL
Can we go someplace and talk?

ADRIANA
Pablo will get upset if I just leave.

GIL
I'm here to take you away from Pablo.

ADRIANA
You?

GIL
Yes - me.

ADRIANA
That's the most confidence I've heard in your voice. Where did it come from?

GIL
Let's just say as a writer I see into women's souls and I sense that you have very deep feelings for me.

ADRIANA
But you're going to be married.

GIL
I'm not so sure about that - can we just go where it's quiet? I'll handle Picasso if I have to.

She pivots and goes off with him.

GIL
(to himself)
Did I say that?

They are almost out the door to party when they run into Luis Bunuel.

BUNUEL
Aha - the soul lost in search of the Golden Age. L'Âge D'or.

GIL
I had a nice idea for a movie for you.

BUNUEL
Yes?

GIL
A group of people are at a formal dinner party and after dinner when they try to leave the room, they can't.

BUNUEL
Why not?

GIL
They just can't seem to exit the door.

BUNUEL
But why?

GIL
And because they're all forced to stay together the veneer of civilization quickly comes off them and they behave as who they really are - animals.

BUNUEL
But why don't they just walk out of the room?

GIL
Just think about it - that's all I'm saying - maybe one day you'll be shaving and it'll tickle your fancy.

They go off as Bunuel gets in last line.

BUNUEL
I just don't see what's holding them there.

CUT TO:

EXT. PRETTY LOCATION - NIGHT

Gil and Adriana at romantic locale, perhaps the place she took him one time.

GIL
I love you. I loved you from the first minute we met.

ADRIANA
I think what you love is the idea of me.

GIL
What does that mean?

ADRIANA
You're a young writer from New York who romanticizes Paris. I live what appears to you to be an exciting life amongst all these bohemian artists so you fancy yourself in love with me.

GIL
Yes, in a way I'm running away from something... but that doesn't mean you're not my dream girl.

ADRIANA
That's exactly what I'm saying - that I'm some kind of dream for you.

GIL
Yes - you're a dream. You're my escape.

ADRIANA
From?

GIL
My culture - my world - where greatness and decency has vanished into a toilet bowl of mediocrity and greed.

ADRIANA
Paris is full of American expatriates looking for the answer.

GIL
It's sad because ugly as reality is it's made uglier than it has to be... not to mention an escape from my impending marriage which I let myself get seduced into because I've been weak and stupid and not manly or true or brave and courageous.

ADRIANA
It would be so great if I could just walk out of my relationship with Picasso.

GIL
You could just walk out - what stops you?

ADRIANA
I can't seem to leave the room - it's as if this force keeps me with him. I thought I could escape with Hemingway to Africa but that wasn't the answer.

GIL
Look, we cannot over analyze this too much or we're lost. I know you love me - I know it - I'm certain of it.

They kiss.

ADRIANA
Let's go to my apartment.

GIL
Picasso's studio?

ADRIANA
No - I've always keep my one little room - my oasis to run to.

GIL
(leaning into her face for kiss)
This is a love that will defy not only time but string theory.

CUT TO:

INT. ADRIANA'S GARRET ROOM - NIGHT

It is what you'd think. La Bohème, the skylight, all charm.

They make love, camera protects them discreetly.

CUT TO:

INT. ADRIANA'S GARRET ROOM - NIGHT

After, as they lay in bed.

ADRIANA
What are you thinking?

GIL
That for a brief moment, for the only time in my life, my obsessive fear of death left me.

ADRIANA
My god, you writers are all so melodramatic.

She reaches to light a cigarette.

GIL
You know you have to stop smoking.

ADRIANA
Why?

GIL
It's very bad for your health. It causes cancer and heart disease.

ADRIANA
Who says?

GIL
The surgeon gen - well it seems obvious, doesn't it? Sucking smoke into your lungs.

ADRIANA
I love it. And only little old ladies from Dubuque think it's bad for you.

GIL
Hmm - interesting problem -

ADRIANA
(affectionately)
Did anyone ever tell you, you were a little nuts?

GIL
I can't believe it. I'm a writer - it's the twenties - Paris - Hemingway - Picasso - Fitzgerald - Gertrude Stein is critiquing my book...

ADRIANA
You've mentioned everyone but me.

GIL
You're first and foremost... the beautiful bohemian expatriate in the garret in Montparnasse.

ADRIANA
I was right. It's everything I represent.

GIL
Oh stop it.
(he kisses her)
Adriana.

ADRIANA
I'm very tired and I have to tell Picasso.

GIL
Yes, and I need to talk with Inez.

ADRIANA
But that's tomorrow. Tonight it's sweet dreams.

She nods off. He is deep in thought and finally nods off.

CUT TO:

INT. ADRIANA'S GARRET ROOM - DAY

Next morning, sun piling in - Gil awakens alone in bed -

GIL
Where am I? Adriana?

ADRIANA
(other part of room or bathroom)
I'm getting dressed. You were tossing and talking in your sleep last night.

GIL
Yes?

ADRIANA
Who's Jack Nicholson and what's Zithromax?

GIL
Oh nothing - I was just having some crazy dreams. I'm hungry.

ADRIANA
Well I don't stay here so there's nothing in the ice box but we can go out for breakfast - or by now lunch - it's almost twelve noon.

GIL
God is it that late? No wonder I'm starved.

ADRIANA
There's a good roll and coffee place nearby - we can walk over.

GIL
(deep breath by window-sun floods in)
Um - what a day.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET TO RESTAURANT - DAY

Gil and Adriana strolling to restaurant.

ADRIANA
I know Gertrude Stein told Ernest you had a very good writing style and he would like it.

GIL
Yes? Hemingway told you that?

ADRIANA
He did.

GIL
She's been a great help. My whole life I wanted to write. But I needed someone I trusted to critique me. And you? You originally wanted to paint?

ADRIANA
Yes - but I also have very middle class desires too - a home, a family - children. You like children?

GIL
Children?

ADRIANA
Yes.

GIL
Er - it's something I hadn't planned - yet - I mean I love children but I had hoped to establish myself first... at least one published novel. Hey, I recognize this place. That clock!

The clock is striking twelve noon.

ADRIANA
It's exactly noon.

A horse and carriage pulls up. A man and woman dressed Belle Époque summon them.

DIDIER
Come on - get in - On y vas.

ADRIANA
What?

CHLOE
Montez. On y vas. Nous allons être en retard.

GIL
Who are you?

DIDIER
Hurry - please.

They get in.

ADRIANA
Where are we going?

DIDIER
Gaston is having a picnic. I'm Didier, this is Chloe.

CUT TO:

EXT. PICNIC LOCATION - DAY

Arriving at picnic, perhaps in Bois or comparable park in Paris. There are other characters about in period dress.

ADRIANA
I can't believe how beautiful this is.

GIL
All those pictures of Belle Époque Paris didn't lie.

ADRIANA
But how did this happen?

GIL
I know, it's surreal - and yet just when the clock struck twelve -

GASTON
Welcome - you are?

GIL
Er - friends of Didier and Chloe.

GASTON
Ah of course, the Americans. Is that the fashion in New York these days? I never cease to be amazed by how you people dress - so modern - the true avant garde - marvelous. Excusez-moi -

And he's off.

ADRIANA
This is my dream come true and I have you to share it with.

GIL
Nothing amazes me anymore - I want to tell you something.

ADRIANA
I'm too excited. I want to see Paris - the Paris I love more than any other - we can talk later over dinner at Maxim's.

GIL
I only have Euros.

ADRIANA
What?

GIL
Let's see - credit card - well they'll take American money - I have that.

CUT TO:

EXT. MONTAGE/BELLE ÉPOQUE PARIS - DAY

Gil and Adriana at several well chosen locales that thrill her with Belle Époque Paris. Much can be found and peopled with the right dressed extras.

Maybe a locale is known to us from a painting.

(We could check to see the cost of a special effect for a wide shot of the Champs Elysee. They did this kind of thing in King Kong with Times Square - we can see if it's feasible.)

CUT TO:

INT. MAXIM'S - NIGHT

Gil and Adriana at Maxim's - right out of Gigi. (Maxim's would be first choice. If it cannot be gotten, there are several places that exist that are exactly as they were during the Belle Époque.)

ADRIANA
Everyone's staring at the way we look.

GIL
You heard what Gaston said. We're those modern, avant garde Americans.

ADRIANA
I love all the clothes - the women look dazzling. It makes the twenties so prosaic, so dull by comparison.

GIL
And the twenty-first century?

ADRIANA
Oh god - who knows - that's science fiction - once we hit the year 2000 it's either going to be fabulous or quite depressing - what do you think?

GIL
Er - my guess is unfulfilled promise, vast exploitation and cheap thrills masquerading as excitement.

ADRIANA
You are a pessimist. But you could say that about our era, the twenties - but this moment, the Golden Age.

GIL
Oh no, the twenties are thrilling -

ADRIANA
Let's dance.

GIL
I can't do this kind of dancing.

ADRIANA
We'll try - who cares if they stare - we're Americans - we're brash style setters.

They dance romantically.

CUT TO:

INT. MOULIN ROUGE/STAGE - NIGHT

The girls dance.

CUT TO:

INT. MOULIN ROUGE/AUDIENCE - NIGHT

Gil and Adriana sit and hold hands. Dance ends and girls run off.

ADRIANA
(to waiter)
Encore du vin. Le même chose.
(to Gil)
Isn't this something. Look! Look!

She points out Lautrec sketching.

ADRIANA
Pablo worships him. I have to say hello. Come with me, I'm nervous.

GIL
We shouldn't bother him.

ADRIANA
But we know he's a lonely man... he craves company.

They go over. She speak to Lautrec.

ADRIANA
We're both great admirers of your work. Nous sommes tout les 2 de grands admirateurs de votre travail.

LAUTREC
Merci madame.

ADRIANA
Pouvons nous vous offrir un verre?

LAUTREC
J'en serai enchanté mademoiselle. Prenez un siège je vous en prie.

ADRIANA
He's asking us to sit down with him.

LAUTREC
êtes vous Américain?

GIL
We're both American.

LAUTREC
Je l'ai devine a votre accent.

ADRIANA
Nous aimons, tous les 2 vos dessins et peintures, en réalité tout ce que vous faîtes.

LAUTREC
(welcomes two new men to table)
Oh - puisses vous présenter mes amis... Monsieur Degas and Monsieur Gauguin.

ADRIANA
Ohmigod - hello - enchanté -
(ad-lib hellos best they can)
(to Gil)
Isn't this thrilling? You see the sketch he's made? Nobody can draw like that today - not Pablo, not Matisse -

We see fine drawing, Lautrec style.

GIL
Parlez Anglais?

DEGAS
No monsieur.

LAUTREC
Il parle un petit peut.

GAUGUIN
I speak well - je parle très bien.

DEGAS
(scornfully over Gauguin's boasting)
Ah -

GAUGUIN
Degas and I were just talking about how - cette generation est pourvue de sens et mangue d'imagination.

ADRIANA
He says they find this génération sterile and empty -

GAUGUIN
Le Renaissance est beaucoup mieux - better to have lived during the Renaissance.

ADRIANA
No - this is the Golden Age - L'Âge D'or.

DEGAS
Pas do tout - le Renaissance - c'était mieux - leur vêtements sont très, très modernes, tres originaux.

ADRIANA
He says our clothes are very modern and original.

GIL
I must tell Ralph Lauren. Er - a private joke.

LAUTREC
Oui, très différents du style Américain.

GAUGUIN
I would like to paint you - your face - très intéressant.

GIL
Shouldn't you be in Tahiti?

GAUGUIN
I? What? Yes - I live on the island - a much better life than here - better there - but then I miss Paris - up and back - Qu'est que vous faîtes dans la vie?

ADRIANA
What do I do? Je suis étudiant. En haute couture - fashion designer but studying -

DEGAS
Ah ça compte pour les vêtements outrageux.

GAUGUIN
Ces gens sont la nouvelle tendance - et vous, monsieur?

GIL
Me? - I'm a writer -

ADRIANA
Écrivain.

LAUTREC
Vous devriez la présenter a Richard.

GAUGUIN
He wants Degas to have you meet his friend Richard - to do the costumes for the ballet.

DEGAS
Oui. Richard est toujours a la recherche d'idées fraîches et audacieux.

ADRIANA
Ballet costumes - my god - see, I don't live here. I mean I do but I don't. Je n'habite pas ici.

GIL
I wouldn't get into too many details with them. Let's just leave it that we're temporarily passing through.

ADRIANA
(to Gil)
Can I speak with you a minute?
(to table)
Permettez moi de n'abstenter une minute.
(she gets him off)
I don't want to go back to the twenties.

GIL
What are you talking about?

ADRIANA
I think we should stay here - it's the dawn of the Belle Époque - this is the greatest, most beautiful era Paris has ever known.

GIL
But I like the twenties.

ADRIANA
The twenties are full of strife and uncertainty. But think of it, Gil - the two of us sharing a little garret here in Montmartre... I'll work in the fashion world - I love the styles - you can write... our friends will be Toulouse Lautrec and Paul Cezanne. Maybe you can meet Balzac.

GIL
But I always wanted to exist in the twenties.

ADRIANA
That's the present, it's dull.

GIL
It's not the present for me - I'm from 2006.

ADRIANA
What?

GIL
I dropped in on you just the way we dropped in on the 1890's.

ADRIANA
You did?

GIL
I wanted to escape my present just like you wanted to escape yours. To a golden age.

ADRIANA
You think the twenties are a golden age?

GIL
To me they are.

ADRIANA
But I'm from the twenties and I'm telling you the golden age is the Belle Époque.

GIL
Yes but don't you see - to these guys the golden age was the Renaissance. They'd all trade the Belle Époque to paint alongside Michelangelo or Titian. And those guys probably imagine life was better when Kubla Khan was around. I'm having an insight. A minor one but that accounts for the anxiety of my dream.

ADRIANA
What dream?

GIL
Last night - I dreamed of Jack Nicholson and he was from my time and Zithromax - what if I come down with the flu or herpes. These people don't have antibiotics - or telephones! You can't call 911.

ADRIANA
But if we love each other what does it matter when we live?

GIL
Because if you stay here and this becomes your present, sooner or later you'll imagine another time was really the golden time. And so will I - it doesn't work, Adriana. The present has a hold on you because it's your present and while there's never any progress in the most important things, you get used to what little progress is made - cell phones and Valtrex. The present is always going to seem unsatisfying because life is unsatisfying - that's why Gauguin goes back and forth between Paris and Tahiti - it's my job to try and come up with reasons why it's all worth it.

ADRIANA
That's the problem with writers - you're all so full of words - but I'm more emotional. I'm going to stay because I've always worshipped this time in Paris and if I'm wrong I'll find out.

GIL
I have one stop to make at Gertrude Stein's to get my manuscript and then home.

ADRIANA
So you love Inez more than me.

GIL
No - I love you - but if I'm ever going to write anything worthwhile I've got to get rid of my illusions and living in the past is one of them.

ADRIANA
Goodbye, Gil.

GIL
Goodbye Adriana. Good luck.

They kiss, she turns and goes to the table of artists.

CUT TO:

INT. GERTRUDE STEIN'S PLACE - NIGHT

Gil being admitted to the Stein home. He is full of energy.

STEIN
Ah - Pender - I read your rewrite. Yes... you're nicely on the right track. You've understood me clearly. If the rest of the book reads as well when you're done you'll have something of value.

GIL
(taking it back)
Thank you. I can't tell you how much this means to me.

STEIN
I did have one plot suggestion.

GIL
Yes?

STEIN
The new incident you added - where the girl becomes pregnant and that finally traps the hero into marriage because he's weak...

GIL
Yes - did you have trouble with that because I based it on a true -

STEIN
No, no... I just thought the hero wasn't thinking clearly.

GIL
Meaning?

STEIN
Meaning it seems obvious he's not really the father and the girl was impregnated by the other man -

GIL
You mean Paul and Inez?

STEIN
Who?

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL SUITE - DAY

Gil back in present in mid-argument with Inez.

GIL
You slept with Paul Bates, didn't you?

INEZ
You're crazy - where did you get such an insane notion?

GIL
From Gertrude Stein. She thought it out and it makes perfect sense.

INEZ
Who? Who's Gertrude Stein.

GIL
Don't tell me you've suddenly never heard of Gertrude Stein and Alice Toklas.

INEZ
Gertrude Stein's been dead for years.

GIL
It was William Faulkner who I just missed one night at the Brasserie Lipp who said, the past is not dead. In fact, it's not even past.

INEZ
You're a raving lunatic.

GIL
You had an affair with Paul and he's the father of your child.

INEZ
When? When did I?

GIL
You've had plenty of time since we've been here. Maybe even before - how should I know?

INEZ
I deny it categorically. The hell with Gertrude Stein.

GIL
Aha - but I have a resource unassailable - like Zithromax.

INEZ
Zithromax?

GIL
I said <u>like</u> Zithromax - a technological advance unheard of by the crowd on the Left Bank.

INEZ
What are you talking about?

GIL
DNA.

INEZ
What?

GIL
Using DNA I will prove that I am not the father of your child but Paul is.

INEZ
Okay! Okay! If you're going to take it that far. I slept with Paul. Yes - we were both drunk and full of excitement and I was too caught up to go home and get my diaphragm if you can understand that. Yes, now I'm carrying his child and if I am going to have an unexpected child it's a helluva child to have. So what shall we do about it?

GIL
Good question.

INEZ
Look, you above all should understand. Paris is a very romantic city. I lost my head. We had a little momentary fling. I was taken with the atmosphere, the streets, the boulevards, the cafes. Once we get back home you and I can talk and put this behind us.

GIL
I'm not going back.

INEZ
What?

GIL
I'm staying here.

INEZ
Gil, are you having a breakdown? We can raise this baby as if it's our own. It'll be a brilliant child. Are you so middle class that your son or daughter must come from your sperm?

GIL
Never having had a pet I have grown fond of my sperm over the years. See - it's not the romantic fling, the streets, the boulevards and cafes - it's not even that you're such a dope you got knocked up - it's that I'm not in love with you.

INEZ
What?

GIL
A lot has happened to me since we got here. I won't begin to bore you -

INEZ
Have you met someone else? All those late night walks.

GIL
I did meet another woman but she's with Lautrec and Gauguin.

INEZ
Honey - you're nuts! You don't know what you're doing. You'll regret this. You're blinded by this idealized view of Paris. You'll miss all your usual haunts and habits - you won't be happy here.

GIL
Then I'll move back. But right now I'm going to stay.

INEZ
With who? All your crazy imagined friends? Mother was right about you - there's a part missing. Anyone who makes a living selling Citizen Kane paperweights.

GIL
Have a good trip back.

INEZ
Go ahead. Walk the streets - communicate with the past - goodbye and good riddance.

CUT TO:

INT. MODERN MUSEUM - DAY

The sketch Lautrec did at the Moulin Rouge. The guide is talking to a medium group.

GUIDE
Lautrec often dashed off these sketches just sitting alone at the Moulin Rouge.

GUIDE
My name is Stella.

FADE OUT.